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THE TRUE SONSHIP OF CHRIST INVESTIGATED.

AND

HIS PERSON, DIGNITY AND OFFICES

EXPLAINED AND CONFIRMED

FROM THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only Begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth. *John* i. 14.

Αληθεια διηγειλατο τον Λογον, τον εκ διανοιας ενδιαθετον εν καρδια Θεου. Τουτον τον Λογον εγεννησε προφορικον προ πασης κτισεως. Theoph. Antioch. ad Autolych.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

LONDON:

Printed for EDWARD and CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry.

M DCC LXX VI.

PREFACE.

THE Author of the following Treatiſe ever hath been of opinion, that as divine Revelation is the only and the perfect rule of revealed religion, ſo, by the general voice of Revelation, every capital article of our religion is declared; and that, therefore, to eſtabliſh theſe articles, we muſt conſult the Scriptures at large, and be ſatisfied that we have their univerſal and harmonious teſtimony in proof of them. Upon theſe indubitable principles, he has been at pains to examine the chief articles of religion, which have been generally received in the Chriſtian and proteſtant churches, and is happy to find they are ſo well ſupported. One article, however, he greatly apprehends, has not been examined and determined by this unerring ſtandard, even the Generation and Sonſhip of our Bleſſed Saviour. As this is an article of capital importance, and has been long a ſubject of controverſy in the Chriſtian church, the Author reſolved to inquire into it with the greater attention. The appellation, Son of God, he eaſily perceived

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perceived must be a personal character; and so must be applied to Christ, in one of these three respects, viz. as he is God, the second person of the Godhead, begotten by the first from all eternity; or as he is Man, created by the divine power, or lastly, as he is God-man, generated by the unition of both these natures in one complex person. This is evidently an article of revealed religion: and as the fairest way to determine it, he resolved to consult every passage in the Old and New Testaments, in which our Blessed Saviour is held forth as the Son of God, and examine to which of these explications they would most naturally apply.

He has done so; and after a careful collection and candid examination of the many texts of Scripture, which represent our Saviour as the Son of God, he could not find any general or convincing evidence, that this character belongs to him, either as he is God only, or as he is man only; but that the general, unanimous, and consistent voice of revelation, declares him to be Son of God, as he is God-man, begotten of the Father, by the unition of the Divine Word with human nature in his incarnation. This capital point fixed, he proceeded to consider the accounts given

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in Scripture of the generation of the Son of God, the perſonal excellence and dignity he poſſeſſes, the offices he bears, and the honours he enjoys, and to examine whether they alſo would beſt apply to this notion of his Sonſhip, which he found they do.

Theſe enquiries gave riſe to the following Diſcourſes. The Author has delivered the greateſt part of them to a numerous congregation, who were univerſally ſatisfied that the explication given of this matter, is the Scriptural and juſt one. He has ſubmitted them to ſome of the moſt judicious and learned of his brethren, who have all acknowledged the evidence of their truth; and urged the publication of them, as what might be of real ſervice to the intereſts of Chriſtianity. Whether the evidence he has produced in proof of his explication of our Saviour's Sonſhip is decifive, the impartial world will judge. The Author ſhall only ſay, that the explication of it here given ſtands clear of thoſe difficulties with which all others are attended, and is ſupported by much ſtronger evidence, than any other that hath yet been propoſed. He knows of no bad conſequence it can have, and hopes it may have good ones. Reconciling our Saviour's

our's proper Sonſhip, with his ſupreme Deity, it will be no unſeaſonable antidote to thoſe Arian and Socinian errors which continue to peſter the Chriſtian Church, and which have all along ſprung, in a great degree, from miſtaken notions of our Saviour's Sonſhip. Containing an explication of the chief article of revealed religion, it will be a general key to the Bible, by which many parts of it will be better underſtood. And as it not only eſtabliſhes the proper Sonſhip of Chriſt, but delineates the dignity of his perſon as Son of God, unfolds the important offices for which he aſſumed that character, and points out the duties we muſt perform to him, if we would have the benefit of theſe offices, it contains an abridgement of the Chriſtian ſcheme, and ſhews its expediency for the honour of God, and the happineſs of his creatures, and the neceſſity of our compliance with it, if we would obtain that ſalvation for which it is appointed.

THE

THE TRUE SONSHIP OF CHRIST INVESTIGATED, &c.

NO article of the Chriſtian Faith is of greater importance than the Sonſhip of Chriſt. Upon this depend the whole mediatorial character, dignity and offices of our Bleſſed Redeemer, the ſalvation by him that as Chriſtians we expect, and the duty that as Chriſtians we owe to him. But no article perhaps of our holy religion has been more the ſubject of controverſy in every age of the Chriſtian Church. That Jeſus is the Son of God, is ſo clearly declared in every part of the word of God, that all Chriſtians have acknowledged it. But in what ſenſe he is the Son of God, and is affirmed in Scripture to be ſo, has long been matter of much unhappy contention and debate. As Chriſt in his complex perſon poſſeſſes two natures, the divine and the human, ſome have held him to be the Son of God from the generation of his divine perſon by the Father from all eternity, and ſome from the ſupernatural formation of his human nature in the fulneſs of time. Others thinking the firſt opinion too high to conſiſt with real divinity, and the ſecond too low to ſupport theſe diſtinguiſhing characters,

God's begotten and his only begotten Son, have held him to be the Son of God from his office of mediator, or the honours God has beſtowed on him in raiſing him from the dead, and exalting him to be heir and Lord of all. The diſpute, though long agitated, is not over; which ſhows that the point is not yet placed in a light and eſtabliſhed by evidence which produce general conviction. It has revived of late in the Proteſtant Churches, and begins to be canvaſſed with a degree of free enquiry leſs known in former ages. The belief of it required by God in order to our ſalvation, makes it preſumable that he hath revealed it with ſufficient clearneſs; if we carefully and impartially attend to his revelations. Our Saviour's character and offices intimately connected with his Sonſhip, the hopes we entertain from him, and the juſt honours we ought to pay to him, give this article an importance that entitles it to the moſt ſerious attention of every Chriſtian; and which ought to excite every friend to Chriſtianity and to mankind, if poſſible, to eſtabliſh this truth upon its true and ſcriptural foundation, and to confirm it by evidence which every candid and judicious perſon muſt acknowledge to be deciſive.

But this, though a capital part, is not the whole of our deſign. The proper explication of the Sonſhip of Chriſt will include a delineation of his general perſon, his natures, and offices. Theſe are all related parts of this great ſubject, and the elucidation of them is neceſſary to unfold fully his character as the Son of God our Saviour, and to ſhow how he is thereby qualified for the offices he executes: and the whole will be proper to juſtify the wiſdom of God in this wonderful conſtitution, and to give us thoſe juſt ſentiments of this

this glorious perſon in his whole character, that will at once direct the ſacred regards, that as Chriſtians we owe to our divine Saviour and Lord, and ſupport the high hopes we juſtly repoſe in him. With this view I ſhall endeavour to purſue the following plan, which bids faireſt for a juſt deciſion and explication of this important ſubject. I ſhall

I. Prove that in the complex perſon of Chriſt there are two diſtinct natures, the divine and human, united and co-exiſting in one perſon.

II. Show that this perſon is in Scripture called the Son of God, his begotten, his only begotten Son, fix the proper notion of generation, and repreſent the improper and unſcriptural ſenſes in which this character has been aſcribed to him.

III. Eſtabliſh the Sonſhip of our Bleſſed Saviour, on what ſeems plainly to be its proper and ſcriptural foundation.

IV. Explain more particularly his generation, and the wonderful conſtitution of his perſon.

V. Repreſent the dignity, excellence and glory of his perſon and character.

VI. Treat of the great offices for which he was intended by his Father, with his effectual performance of them.

VII. Unfold the high honours and rewards to which he is exalted, with his juſt claim to them. And

VIII. Conclude all by pointing out, and recommending the great duties which we owe to him in his whole glorious character.

CHAP. I.

That in the complex Perſon of Chriſt there are two Natures, the Divine and Human, or the Second Perſon of the Trinity, and a human Soul and Body, all co-exiſting in one Perſon.

THE perſon of Chriſt is the foundation of all the characters which in Scripture are aſcribed to him; and a proper knowledge of his perſon muſt be the beſt method of aſcertaining in what ſenſe the characters attributed to him in Scripture muſt be underſtood. Before we proceed then to determine his Sonſhip, unfold his dignity, or repreſent his offices; let us take a view of his perſon in general, and of the natures contained in it. Now, if we conſult the record that God hath given us of his Son, we ſhall find that there are two diſtinct natures affirmed of him in Scripture, the nature of God and the nature of man. In other words, the complex perſon of Chriſt is compoſed of the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, a glorious created ſpirit called his ſoul, and a real human body, all united and co-exiſting in one general perſon. Theſe things we ſhall evince in order.

I. The firſt and the higheſt nature which the Scriptures aſcribe to our Bleſſed Saviour is the Divine; and this we ſhall find affirmed of him with an evidence clear and convincing, as the truth to be eſtabliſhed is great and important. That there is one God, or divine, infinite, all-

perfect

perfect eſſence, is the firſt principle of all true religion, and the joint dictate of reaſon and revelation. But revelation farther aſſures us of what unaſſiſted reaſon could not have diſcovered, *viz.* that in the unity of this Divine Eſſence, there coexiſt three diſtinct perſonal ſubſiſtences, ſo diſtinguiſhed from each other as to entitle them to diſtinct perſonal names, characters and offices, yet not ſo different but that their nature is numerically the ſame, they being diſtinct perſons, ſubſiſting in one common undivided eſſence. "For there are three that bear record in Hea-"ven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy "Ghoſt, and theſe three are one," 1 *John*, v. 7. This is the fundamental article of revealed religion, the foundation of the whole chriſtian ſcheme, and therefore revealed with inconteſtable evidence. By the ſame authority by which the Scripture affirms the unity of the Divine Eſſence, it affirms that eſſence to be diſtinguiſhed into three perſonal ſubſiſtences. By all the ſame arguments by which it proves to us the exiſtence and divinity of one Supreme Being, it proves the divinity of all theſe perſons which it affirms to be in the Godhead. And by whatever arguments it proves the divinity of any other perſon in the Godhead, by the ſame does it evince the divinity of Chriſt. The Supreme God, or any perſon in the Godhead, the Scripture demonſtrates by calling him God, or giving him the names expreſſive of true and Supreme Deity; by attributing to him perfections that are eſſential to, and characteriſtical of the true God; by aſcribing works to him which the true God alone can effect, and religious worſhip which the true God alone can receive. And by all thoſe topics of proof does it evince the divinity of the Son our Saviour.

1. Chriſt is expreſsly called God, and the names expreſſive of the true God are in Scripture aſcribed to him. Thus God the Father, though he will not give his glory to another, nor aſcribe divinity to any but who is really divine, affirms the deity of his coeſſential Son. "To the Son he "ſaith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," *Pſalm* xlv. 6. *Heb.* i. 8. Iſaiah calls him Immanuel, "God with us," *Iſaiah* vii. 14. and the "mighty God," chap. ix. 6. and aſcribes to him the proper and diſtinguiſhing name of the true God, even Jehovah, chap. vi. 1. which glorious perſon an inſpired Evangeliſt aſſures us was Chriſt, *John* xii. 41. Jeremiah attributes to him the ſame incommunicable character in terms the moſt direct and explicit. Speaking of the Meſſiah, he ſays "this, is the name whereby he "ſhall be called *, Jehovah our righteouſneſs," *Jer.* xxiii. 6. John, when purpoſely eſtabliſhing our Saviour's divinity againſt thoſe firſt heretics, who had the impiety to deny it, aſſures us, "That in "the beginning was the Word, and the Word "was with God, and the Word was God," *John* vi. 1. And affirms of him in another place, "this is the true God, and eternal life," 1 *John* v. 20. Thomas, on the fulleſt evidence that he was God as well as man, calls him "My "Lord and my God," *John* xx. 28. And Paul in all the fullneſs and ſtrength of language affirms him to be the "great God and our Saviour," *Tit.* ii. 13. and that he is "over all, God bleſſed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5.

2. That Chriſt is true and ſupremely God is no leſs evident from all thoſe perfections eſſential to, and inſeparable from, the Deity that are attributed to Chriſt. Is eternity an eſſential and diſtinguiſhing perfection of the true God? It is aſcribed

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aſcribed to Chriſt. So Iſaiah calls him the ever-laſting Father, *Iſaiah* ix. 6. Chriſt affirms of himſelf, "Before Abraham was, I am"; expreſſing his immutable eternal exiſtence, *John* viii. 58. And calls himſelf Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt, *Rev.* i. 8. Are immenſity and omnipreſence eſſential to God? They are aſcribed to Chriſt. "Where two or three are ga-"thered together in my name, ſays our Bleſſed "Lord, there am I in the midſt of them," *Matt.* xviii. 20. When he gave commiſſion to his diſciples to go into all the world and preach his goſpel to every creature, and when his human nature was about to aſcend to the higheſt heaven, yet from the infinitude of his divinity he declares, "lo I am with you always, even unto the end of "the world," *Matt.* xxviii. 20. Is omniſcience a characteriſtical perfection of the Deity? It is affirmed of Chriſt, "Lord thou knoweſt all things, "ſays Peter, thou knoweſt that I love thee," *John* xxi. 17. And this diſtinguiſhing character which the true God claims as his incommunicable prerogative, *Jer.* xvii. 10. Chriſt appropriates to himſelf, "I am he that ſearch-"eth the reins and hearts," *Rev.* ii. 23. Is omnipotence a diſtinctive attribute of the Deity? It is affirmed of Chriſt; Iſaiah calls him the mighty God, *Iſ.* ix. 6. I am Alpha and Omega, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, *Rev.* i. 8. Accordingly Paul aſſures us, that Chriſt hath power to ſubdue all things to himſelf, *Phil.* iii. 21. Or is immutability of nature and exiſtence an eſſential and diſtinguiſhing character of the true God? It in like manner is aſcribed to our Bleſſed Saviour. The heavens and the earth ſhall periſh, but Chriſt endures; they ſhall wax old as a

garment and be changed, but Chriſt is the ſame, his years have no end, *Pſ.* cii. 26. 27. *Heb.* i. 11, 12. And of this divine perſonage the Apoſtle affirms, that he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, *Heb.* xiii. 8.

3. As a farther evidence of his divinity, works are aſcribed to Chriſt which God all-perfect alone can perform. By Chriſt was that ſtupendous effect of infinite power, wiſdom and goodneſs, even the creation of this vaſt Univerſe effected, which all reaſon and all Scripture determine to be the prerogative of God alone, *Pſ.* xix. 1. *Rom.* 1. 20. Of old haſt thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands, ſays the pſalmiſt of the true God, *Pſ.* cii. 25. And the apoſtle interprets them of Chriſt Jeſus, *Heb.* i. 10. All things, ſays John, were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, *John* i. 3. By him, ſays Paul, were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him, *Col.* i. 16. By Chriſt is the whole univerſe preſerved. For "by him all things "conſiſt," *Col.* i. 17. "He upholdeth all things "by the word of his power," *Heb.* i. 3. By Chriſt, and at his very will and command, were miracles wrought on univerſal nature; which none but the omnipotent God could perform. The raging winds and waves were ſtilled at his command. Water was changed into wine at his will, and the barren fig-tree withered at his frown. A few loaves and fiſhes were increaſed by a creative power to feed ſeveral thouſands of hungry people, and in place of their being conſumed, the remainder much exceeded the original ſtock. Diſeaſes of all

kinds

kinds were inſtantly healed by him, without any other preſcription, but his ſaying the word and the cure was effected. The deaf were made to hear, the dumb to ſpeak, and the born blind to ſee. Devils, when he ordered, were caſt out of thoſe poſſeſſed by them; and the dead at his command were raiſed again into life. Chriſt has power to forgive ſins, which, as they are committed againſt God, reaſon and revelation join in aſſuring us, none but God can forgive, *Mark* ii. 7, 10. By the Son, as mighty God, are the dead at laſt to be raiſed; "for the hour cometh, "ſays he, in which the dead ſhall hear the voice of "the Son of God, and they that hear ſhall live," *John* v. 25. By the Son is the world to be ſolemnly judged; for the Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, *John* v. 22. which as it requires infinite knowledge and rectitude to paſs juſt ſentence on every individual of the millions of men and fallen angels that ſhall be judged, and infinite power to put his ſentences in execution; a God poſſeſſing theſe perfections, alone can perform. In fine, the renovation, as well as the creation of the world, is to be effected by Chriſt. For St. John in his prediction of that great event, tells us, that he that ſits on the throne is to make all things new, *Rev.* xxi. 5.

4. As an additional argument of our Saviour's "Divinity, it is to be obſerved, that the ſame religious worſhip which is due to the true God alone, the All-perfect Being, the Creator, Preſerver and Lord of the univerſe, is by divine appointment to be paid to the Son. And no wonder when He and his Father, as to their divine eſſence, are one; and all theſe characters of true Deity, that make them the object of religious adoration, belong alike to both. Thus ſays

God by the Pſalmiſt, " Kiſs ye the Son, leſt he " be angry, and ye periſh from the way; bleſſed " are all they that put their truſt in him." *Pſal.* ii. 12. " Ye believe in God, ſays our Saviour, " believe alſo in me." *John* xiv. 1. And in general he aſſures us, that it is the will of God that " all men honour the Son, even as they honour " the Father." *John* v. 23. Paul both affirms, that religious worſhip is to be paid to the Son, and intimates his right to it, both as he is a divine perſon, and as God-Man Mediator; " who, " being in the form of God, thought it not rob- " bery to be equal with God, but made himſelf of " no reputation, and took upon him the form of a " ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of ſinful " men; and being found in faſhion as a man, he " humbled himſelf and became obedient unto death, " even the death of the croſs; wherefore God " alſo hath highly exalted him and given him a " name, which is above every name; that at the " name of Jeſus, every knee ſhould bow, of " things in heaven, and things in earth, and " things under the earth; and that every tongue " ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the " glory of God the Father." *Phil.* ii. 6—11. In Chriſt's name therefore, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, is baptiſm, that ſolemn act of our religion, ordained to be performed, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. From him as well as from the Father does *Paul* pray for grace and peace, 1 *Cor.* i. 3. *Eph.* i. 3. To him, by direction of heaven, his firſt martyr, Stephen, addreſſes his dying prayer, " Lord Jeſus, receive my ſpirit," *Acts* vii. 59. Before his incarnation, Iſaiah aſſures us, that the ſeraphim aſcribe to him the ſame religious adoration as they do to the other divine Perſons, *Iſai.* vi. 3. compared with *John* xii.

xii. 41. And John teſtifies, that the whole celeſtial inhabitants, angelic and human, continue to pay the ſame high devotion to the Son, as to his Father; ſaying, "Worthy is the Lamb "that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, "and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and "glory and bleſſing.—Bleſſing and honour, and "glory and power, be unto him that ſitteth upon "the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." *Rev.* v. 11—13.

Thus every act of religious worſhip is to be performed to Chriſt, and with the utmoſt propriety: for ſince he is affirmed to be God, ſince every perfection of God is aſcribed to him, ſince he hath exerted theſe perfections in every work of creation, providence, and redemption, as the other Perſons have done, he muſt be conjunct with them in divinity, and ſo conjunct with them in every religious act to which divinity is intitled.

5. To all theſe evidences of our Saviour's divinity we may add, that he is called in Scripture, the begotten and proper Son of God, affirmed to be one with his divine Father, and ranked in the ſame claſs with the other divine Perſons in the coeſſential Trinity. A Son, a begotten and proper Son, as we ſhall ſhew our Saviour is declared to be, muſt ever poſſeſs the ſame nature with his Father who begat him; for whatever generates, generates its like. The original and originating principle of the Son, being communicated from the Father, muſt be eſſentially the ſame with him: and whatever additional ſubſtance it receives in conſequence of its generation, ſtill that originating principle is the chief conſtituent of the Son, and characterizes him to be of the ſame nature with his Father. But if this holds in human generation, where the originating principle is ſe-

parated from the Father, and a Son is produced of the same specific nature; infinitely more must it hold in the generation of the Son of God. For, though the accession of an additional nature, which is necessary to a proper generation, is made to him; yet the chief constituent of his complex Person, and which constitutes that Person the Son of God, is the second personal subsistence in the Godhead, which is inseparable from the Father, however distinguished from him; and so makes them as to divine essence numerically one. Accordingly our Saviour declares expressly, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. "I am in the Father, and the Father in "me," *John* xiv. 11. And therefore affirms, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father," ver. 9.

But Christ is not only proved to be God, by being declared the Son of God and one with God, or a distinct Person in the same divine essence; as a consequence of this, and a farther evidence of his divinity, he is uniformly classed with the other coessential Persons in the Trinity, whenever that sacred Triad is fully mentioned in Scripture. Thus Christ, when he institutes baptism, ordains it to be administred "in the "name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghost," *Matt.* xxviii. 19. When Paul represents the order and œconomy of the divine Persons in the scheme of our salvation, he ranks Christ with the other two. "For through him, says he, "we have access by one Spirit unto the Father," *Eph.* ii. 18. In like manner, when he prays to them in behalf of the Corinthians, he prays, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love "of God, and the communion of the Holy "Ghost," to be with them, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 14.

And

And John tells us, that the three divine witneſſes in heaven who bear record to the truth of the goſpel, are "the Father, the Word, and "the Holy Ghoſt, and that theſe three are one," 1 *John* v. 7.

Such is the manifold and convincing evidence we have that Chriſt Jeſus is a divine Perſon. As this is a truth of the utmoſt importance, it was proper it ſhould be certified by the higheſt evidence: and what higher evidence can be deſired than is here given? Every paſſage of Scripture we have quoted furniſhes an argument for our Saviour's divinity. Every claſs under which theſe arguments are reduced, afford a complex proof of it. All theſe topics of argument ſtrengthen each other; and, the whole taken together, furniſh a connected evidence which to every one who acknowledges the Scriptures to be the Word of God, muſt be abſolutely deciſive. For whatever evidence the Scriptures give us that there is a God, or that any Perſon of the Godhead is divine, the ſame evidence it gives us that Chriſt is God, or one of the divine Perſons that exiſt in the Godhead.

But as we have the higheſt evidence revelation can give us that Chriſt is truly God; ſo we have the ſame evidence that he is equal in divinity with the Father and the Spirit. The divine Eſſence is one; it is infinite, and indiviſible. In it there exiſt three perſonal ſubſiſtences. Theſe ſubſiſtences are perſonal, and they are diſtinct; yet they are not ſuch diſtinct Perſons, as to have different natures, ſuch as we have; but ſuch real and perſonal diſtinctions as can ſubſiſt in one and the ſame undivided eſſence. Theſe perſonal diſtinctions are eſſential to the Deity, and are of the ſame neceſſary exiſtence, the ſame eternity, the

the ſame ſupreme Deity, with the divine Eſſence they exiſt in; poſſeſſing all the ſame eſſence, they all poſſeſs the ſame divine perfections; for the perfections of the Deity are nothing, but his all-perfect Eſſence. As Chriſt then is truly God, he muſt be the ſelf-ſame in eſſence, and equal in perfection, with the other divine Perſons that neceſſarily co-exiſt with him in the ſame Godhead. For whatever notions of a generated, created, or ſubordinate divinity, mankind have imagined, there is nothing more certain, than that all real divinity is one and the ſame. The created Deity of the Arians, and the deified creature of the Socinians, are each of them a contradiction in terms; to ſay nothing at preſent, of a begotten Deity or divine Perſon, in the ſenſe in which both the modern refiners of the Arian ſcheme, and thoſe who hold his ſupreme divinity have explained his generation. Such opinions, whatever their abettors may imagine, when examined to the bottom, are equally unphiloſophical and unſcriptural. They confound time with eternity, finite with infinite, the Creator with the creature. They confer infinite qualities on a finite ſubject; and give the incommunicable eſſence and perfection of God Moſt High to beings dependent and infinitely inferiour to him, which is abſurdity in the extreme. As all Scripture then affirms the Son to be God, and aſcribes to him the higheſt perfections of God, ſo all Scripture and all reaſon, directed by Scripture, aſſure us that he is equal and the ſame in eſſence with the Father and Spirit; and that not a perfection belongs to the divine Nature, nor to any of the perſonal ſubſiſtences into which that nature is eſſentially and neceſſarily diſtinguiſhed, but belongs alſo to the divine Perſon of Chriſt.

II. But, beſide this divine Nature or ſubſiſtence, the Scriptures aſſure us, that in the complex perſon of Chriſt, there is alſo a perfect human nature. By a perfect human nature, we mean a human ſoul or created ſpirit, formed for union with a human body, and a real human body with which that ſoul is connected. This human nature our Bleſſed Saviour aſſumed into union with his divine Perſon, that he might be Mediator between God and man; and the grand connecting bond, as we ſhall ſee, between God and his creation. As this part of our Saviour's perſon is alſo of the higheſt conſequence to our hopes and happineſs, like the former, it is declared with the fulleſt evidence. Some Scriptures affirm his human nature in general; others hold forth and certify particularly the conſtituent parts of it. As evidences of his human nature in general, he was foretold to be the ſeed of the woman, which ſhould bruiſe the head of the ſerpent, *Gen.* iii. 15. to be the ſeed of Abraham, *Gal.* iii. 16. to be a ſon born of a Virgin, *Iſai.* vii. 14. to be a branch out of the root of Jeſſe, *Iſa.* xi. 11. and the Son of David, *Luke* i. 32. Accordingly the angel foretells to Mary that ſhe ſhould conceive and bring forth a Son, ver. 31. After his incarnation, the apoſtle Paul aſſures us that God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, *Gal.* iv. 4. that though he was in the form of God, yet he took upon himſelf the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of man, and was found in faſhion as a man, *Phil.* ii. 6—8. And, in general, he declares, that in all things he was made like unto his brethren, *Heb.* ii. 17. All theſe Scriptures teſtify that he had a compleat human nature, for by the

ſame

ſame language is the nature of man uſually expreſſed.

But we have not only theſe evidences of his human nature in general; we are alſo certified particularly of his human ſoul and body of which that nature is compoſed. The nobleſt part of his humanity was his human ſoul; formed for union with his divine Perſon on the one part, and with his human body on the other, and as it were the proper bond of union between them. That his divine Perſon therefore did not actuate his human body as the Apollinarians imagined, but that he had a real human ſoul or a created ſpirit, ſimilar though vaſtly ſuperior to ours; beſides the evidence mentioned, we have the moſt expreſs declarations. Thus Iſaiah foretells that God ſhould "make the Saviour's ſoul "an offering for ſin;" that Chriſt ſhould "ſee of "the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied;" becauſe he poured out his ſoul unto death, *Iſai.* liii. 10, 11, 12. Thus we are told, on one occaſion, "that Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit," *Luke* x. 21. and on another, that "he was troubled in ſpirit," *John* xi. 23. At the proſpect of his laſt ſufferings, he exclaims, "Now is my ſoul troubled," *John* xii. 27. Under his inutterable agony in the garden, before his bodily ſufferings from men had begun, he cries out, "My ſoul is exceed-"ing ſorrowful even unto death," *Matt.* xxvi. 38. And at his expiration on the croſs he commends his Spirit into his Father's hands, *Luke* xxiii. 46. which can apply neither to his divine nature, nor to his animal life, but to his human ſoul, which that day was to aſcend into paradiſe.

What farther confirms the truth of his having a human ſoul is, the various powers and affections,

tions, inapplicable either to his divine person or to his human body, but perfectly characteristical of his human soul, which in Scripture are ascribed to him. Thus, besides his omniscient mind which he has as God, a finite understanding is affirmed of him. "For he increased in wisdom "as well as in stature," *Luke* ii. 52. And of the day of judgment he as man did not know during his state of humiliation upon earth, *Mark* xiii. 32. A human will is appropriated by him, when he says to his Father, "Not my will but "thine be done," *Luke* xxii. 42. for his divine will and that of his Father, like their divine nature, ever must be one and the same. And his various affections of grief, sorrow, joy, gladness, &c. of which a finite spirit or soul only can be susceptible, are frequently affirmed of him during his abode upon earth, *Mark* iii. 5. *Matt.* xxvi. 38. *Luke* x. 21. *John* xi. 15.

But as we have the most convincing proof of our Saviour's human soul, so we have every evidence that he likewise had a real human body. This all the predictions given of his birth by the Old Testament Prophets clearly imply, and the declarations of their accomplishment by the writers of the New Testament, confirm beyond all dispute. Thus St. John declares, "that the Word was "made flesh and dwelt among us," *John* i. 14. Christ affirms to his disciples during his life that he had flesh and blood, *John* vi. 55. and after his resurrection he bid them handle him, "for a spirit, "says he, hath not flesh and bones as ye see me "have," *Luke* xxiv. 39. Accordingly, St. Paul calls him "God manifested in the flesh," 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. and assures us that "as the children were par-"takers of flesh and blood, he also himself like-

"wise

" wiſe took part of the ſame," *Heb.* ii. 14. This truth is evident from his being conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, from his being circumciſed, from his increaſing in ſtature as in wiſdom, from his being baptized, from his being ſubject to hunger, thirſt, wearineſs and ſleep; from his being apprehended, ſcourged, crowned with thorns, and crucified; from his being buried, and riſing again from the dead; and in ſhort from all his other actings and ſufferings, that indiſputably ſhow him poſſeſſed of a human body.

Such then is the ample evidence the Scriptures afford us that our Bleſſed Saviour had not only a divine, but a human nature, in a reaſonable ſoul and a true body. So that the ancient heretics that denied this, though leſs impious than thoſe who denied his divinity, were equally unreaſonable; ſince the evidence given us of both, is, to every candid and enquiring mind, beyond all contradiction.

III. One thing more we propoſed here to aſcertain with regard to this illuſtrious perſonage, *viz.* that theſe two natures, divine and human, are united and exiſt in one complex perſon. This indeed is evident from what hath been ſaid; for if it is proved that Chriſt has both a divine and a human nature, and that both theſe are affirmed of the ſame general perſonage; then theſe natures muſt co-exiſt in one perſon, however diſtinct and different they are. The divinity dwells not in the humanity merely as it once did in the Jewiſh Tabernacle or Temple; without any other connexion but a viſible reſidence in ſuch places. Nor does it dwell in it merely as the Divine Spirit dwells and operates in the hearts of good men, as in his temples, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19. but has no perſonal

ſonal union with them. Were this all, the Spirit might be ſaid to be incarnate as well as the Word; "for the Father giveth not the Spirit by meaſure "unto his Son," *John* iii. 34. But revelation aſſures us, that the Divine Word dwells in the human nature of Chriſt, and is connected with it in union greatly more cloſe and intimate than theſe. As in man a rational, ſpiritual ſoul, and a material, animal body, natures eſſentially different, are conjoined in one human perſon; ſo the Divine Word, and a compleat human nature, though eſſentially and infinitely diſtinct, are united in one Immanuel in the complex perſon of our Bleſſed Redeemer. Accordingly, while the moſt ſacred oracles clearly affirm the divine and human natures of Chriſt, they as clearly, and by the very ſame evidence aſſure us, that theſe diſtinct natures are united and co-exiſt in one perſon. Thus Iſaiah repreſents Chriſt as "the Child born, the Son given, and "the mighty God the everlaſting Father," *Iſaiah* ix. 6. The Son, whom he foretells the Virgin was to bear, he affirms was to be Immanuel, God with us, or dwelling perſonally in our nature, for by that only could he dwell among us, and act for our intereſt, ſo that the name muſt be, rather a perſonal, than an official one, and in its primary ſenſe implies the perſonal union of the Divine Word with our human nature, *Iſaiah* vii. 14. Jeremiah, or rather God by him, propheſies that Chriſt ſhould, in the ſame perſon, be a branch unto David, and Jehovah our righteouſneſs, *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. The union of the divine and human natures in one perſon St. John declares in the cleareſt manner, when he tells us, that the Word who in the beginning was with God,

God, and was God, was at Christ's incarnation made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld, not their glories as two distinct persons; but his glory as the only begotten of the Father, in whose complex person both these natures were now united, *John* i. 2, 14. St. Paul represents these two natures under one person, when he affirms that Christ who was in the form of God, after assuming our nature, was found in the fashion of a man, and who in these two natures thus conjoined, first humbled himself, and was then exalted, *Phil.* ii. 6—9. To intimate this personal union he calls him God manifest in the flesh—preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. He assures us, "that of the Jews, as concerning "the flesh, Christ came, who yet as to his divine "subsistence, comprehended in that general name "and person, is over all, God blessed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5. In like manner the same Son of God, who is represented as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; who, as God, made and upholds the world, and as God-man purged our sins, and then sat on the right hand of the throne of God, is always represented under one personal character, notwithstanding the two distinct natures that are plainly ascribed to him, *Heb.* i. 2, 3. And our Blessed Saviour, who must well have known the constitution of his own person, includes under it both his natures, while he affirms of himself in the same person, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning "and the end, the first and the last," which are the known characters of Deity in Scripture: yet he adds, "I am the root and the offspring of "David," an evidence that with his Deity he possessed

poſſeſſed alſo a human nature and both co-exiſting in one complex perſon, *Rev.* xxii. 13, 16.

As a conſequence and farther proof of the union of theſe natures in one perſon, the properties belonging to each nature are attributed to the ſame perſon. The actions proper to each nature are aſcribed to the general perſon. The names expreſſive both of his divinity and humanity, and of theſe united together, as the Word of God, *Rev.* xix. 13. The Man Chriſt Jeſus, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. The Son of God, *Matth.* xxvi. 63. The Son of Man, ver. 34. Immanuel, *Matth.* i. 23. The ſecond Man, and yet the Lord from Heaven, 1 *Cor.* xv. 47. all theſe are indiſcriminately aſcribed to the one perſon of Chriſt. Nay the actions, and names, to the different natures, are from their co-exiſtence in the ſame perſon ſometimes reciprocated of each other, thoſe belonging to the divine being aſcribed to one of human, and thoſe belonging to the human being attributed to one of a divine nature. Thus God is ſaid to have purchaſed the church with his blood, *Acts* xx. 28. And God to have expreſſed his love to mankind in that he laid down his life for us, 1 *John* iii. 16. Theſe things can be explained upon no other principle than the conjunction of the Deity and humanity of our Saviour in one perſon. By ſuch a perſonal union, every thing belonging to each of theſe natures may, in ſtricteſt language, be aſcribed to the common perſon in whom they are united; and every thing belonging to, or done by, the general perſon, may be attributed to that perſon, characteriſed from either of the natures of which that perſon conſiſts.

Thus it is evident from the cleareſt and fulleſt teſtimony of the inſpired writings, that our Bleſſed

Bleſſed Saviour is truely God and truely man; and that in one complex perſon, theſe natures, though perfectly diſtinct, are moſt intimately connected. Theſe primary truths it was neceſſary to eſtabliſh, as upon theſe our ſubſequent inquiries into our Saviour's ſonſhip and dignity will hinge. But the fuller explication of the union of theſe natures, and of the glorious perſonage they compoſe, belongs to the ſubſequent departments of our plan.

CHAP. II.

Of Chriſt's being the Son, the begotten Son of God, the proper Import of that Character, and the improper and unſcriptural Senſes in which it has been applied to him.

HAVING proved that our Bleſſed Saviour poſſeſſes both a divine and human nature, and that theſe two natures are united in one perſon; we proceed next to ſhow that this glorious perſon is God's Son, his begotten Son, to aſcertain the proper notion of generation, and to ſhow the improper and unſcriptural ſenſes in which Jeſus has been held to be the Son of God.

1. The firſt thing here to be done is to prove that Chriſt is the Son, the begotten and proper Son of God; for this is the fundamental article upon which the other parts of our plan do reſt. That Chriſt in ſome ſenſe is the Son of God, is ſo frequently and ſo expreſsly declared in Scripture, that of thoſe who own revelation, none can deny, all have acknowledged it. Before his incarnation God the Father promiſes, "I will be "to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son," 2 *Sam.* vii. 14. *Heb.* i. 5. At his conception by the Bleſſed Virgin, the angel announced to her, "That the holy perſon that ſhould be born of her "ſhould be called the Son of God," *Luke* i. 35. At his baptiſm, his divine Father proclaimed from Heaven with proper ſolemnity, Chriſt's filial relation to him. "This is my beloved Son "in whom I am well pleaſed," *Matth.* iii. 17. and with

with equal clearneſs and ſolemnity repeated it at his tranſiguration, *Matth.* xvii. 5. Chriſt himſelf affirmed this his character and relation, calling God his Father, and declaring himſelf to be the Son of God, *John* xvii. 1. And his apoſtles being aſked by their maſter, who they thought he was? unanimouſly replied, "Thou art Jeſus, the "Son of the living God, *John* vi. 69." and ſo frequently atteſted to this truth as makes any particular quotations altogether unneceſſary.

But Chriſt is not only affirmed in Scripture to be God's Son; but his Son in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe of the word. By a proper Son we mean one who is not adopted, is not merely created, nor has any metaphorical filiation; but one who is really begotten of his Father, and derives his perſon from him by a proper generation. And in this natural and proper ſenſe, all Scripture declares Chriſt to be the Son of God. Thus when God predicts the character of the glorious Meſſiah, he predicts him as his proper, his begotten Son. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten "thee," *Pſal.* ii. 7. When St. John purpoſely treats the birth and perſon of his divine maſter, he reſts his Sonſhip on its proper foundation, his generation by the Father. "The Word was made "fleſh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his "glory, as of the only begotten of the Father," *John* i. 14. Our Bleſſed Saviour himſelf claims this character upon the ſame ground, when he ſays, "God ſo loved the world, that he gave his "only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in "him, might not periſh, but have everlaſting life. "For God ſent not his Son into the world, to con-"demn the world, but that the world through him "might be ſaved; he that believeth on him is not "condemned, he that believeth not is condemned "already,

already, becauſe he believeth not on the only begotten Son of God," *John* iii. 16—18. St. Paul not only deſcribes him as the Son of God, the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, which denote him clearly as God's proper Son, but gives us the moſt direct evidence of this important truth, by affirming, that when his Father bringeth the firſt-begotten into the world, he ſayeth, "Let all the angels "of God worſhip him;" *Heb.* i. 2, 3, 6. Accordingly the ſame apoſtle, upon this natural and juſt foundation of Sonſhip, calls Chriſt God's own, or his proper Son. "He that ſpared not "his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, "how then ſhall he not with him alſo freely give "us all things?" *Rom.* viii. 32. Such then are the numerous, clear and convincing proofs, divine revelation affords us that Chriſt is the Son, the begotten Son of God. And all theſe paſſages that repreſent him as the Son of God, repreſent him as ſuch in his complex perſon. But this will be ſhewed more fully in its proper place. We proceed then,

II. To aſcertain the juſt notion of generation, which is ſo uniformly affirmed to be the proper ground of our Saviour's Sonſhip. This is a matter of the utmoſt importance to a proper diſcovery and eſtabliſhment of the truth we are inveſtigating. The Sonſhip of our Bleſſed Saviour is uniformly expreſſed in the ſame language that is applied to the generated ſons of men. Wherefore it is neceſſary to aſcertain in what generation, as applied to human beings, eſſentially conſiſts, that we may thence infer what it muſt import when applied to expreſs the generation of the Son of God. From inaccurate ideas of generation, many, if not moſt of the erroneous notions con-

cerning the Sonſhip of Chriſt have proceeded. And till this fundamental point is properly eſtabliſhed, it is impoſſible with accuracy to determine in what character our Bleſſed Saviour is held forth to us in Scripture as the proper and begotten Son of God.

Generation or begetting is ſometimes in Scripture, and in common language, applied to things without life, *Job.* xxxviii. 28. and ſometimes to the converſion of mankind to religion, 1 *Cor.* iv. 15. 1 *John* v. 1, 18. But this is only in a metaphorical ſenſe. In ſtrict language it is applicable only to the procreation of living beings; and when uſed for begetting ſons, it is in Scripture reſtricted to the production of the human offſpring; and from the analogy there is betwixt them, tranſferred to the generation of the Son of God. Generation conſiſts not in the production of a being into exiſtence, that had no ſort of exiſtence before. That is a creation, not a generation. According to the moſt accurate diſcoveries, every animal, and human being, exiſts in a living, animalcular ſtate, previous to its generation. It exiſts in the father, partaker of his nature, and one with him in eſſence, yet diſtinguiſhed from him by its individual ſubſiſtence. This its original exiſtence and character depend not on the will of its father; but flow from the ſame conſtitution of nature as the father himſelf. Nor does generation conſiſt in any future acceſſion of paternal nature for the increaſe of this human principle. While it continues in this original ſtate, it may exiſt with the father in the ſame manhood; but never is, nor can be called his ſon: and as it cannot be denominated the ſon of the father, much leſs can it have a filial relation to its mother, with whom it has only a capability of connexion, but is not yet connected.

connected. In what then does generation properly consist? It consists in the unition of this original living principle, communicated by the father as the chief constituent of the future child, with another and an additional substance derived from the mother in conception, forming the complex person procreated of both, and who from this generation, and participation of the substance of both parents, is when born into the world called the son of both. This is the general and acknowledged theory of generation. It supposes a pre-existence of the original living principle in the father, and which is of the same nature with him. It imports the accession of a proper substance also derived from the mother, as necessary to constitute the complex person or child, and give it connexion with, and relation and resemblance to, each of its parents. This is performed by the agency of the father, the activity of the original and originating principle, and the conception of the mother. The original principle continues through its future existence, as the chief constituent of the person begotten: yet by its union with an additional nature, its general character and name are changed. It is now called a son, a son begotten by his father, conceived and born of his mother, and partaking the nature of each parent, is indiscriminately denominated from the one, or from the other.

Such are the terms in which the generation and conception of our Blessed Saviour are expressed in Scripture, and such is their just import. When God represents the most important truths of religion, to be perceived and believed by his reasonable creatures, he must represent them in terms the most proper to express the things signified as

they really are; and to convey the knowledge of them with greateſt clearneſs to our minds. If metaphors are uſed, they muſt be ſuch as ſtrongly reſemble the things repreſented by them. In ſuch figurative ſtyle, indeed, it is neither neceſſary nor poſſible that the agreement hold in every point. Yet it is abſolutely neceſſary that it hold in the capital ones; otherwiſe the metaphor were uſed in vain; or, miſrepreſenting the thing meant to be deſcribed by it, were worſe than vain. But when the thing repreſented is not only greatly analogous to that from which the repreſentation is taken, but in many things the ſame with it; the agreement between the ſign and the thing ſignified muſt be more full and particular. Such is the ſubject of our preſent conſideration. In ſeveral particulars the Son of God in his generation and character muſt widely differ from, and infinitely tranſcend the generation of mere men by which it is explained to us; and there whatever correſponds not to the glorious ſubject muſt be removed, and the compariſon ſtop. But the conſtant unlimited uſe of the metaphor, if we ought to call it ſuch, by the God of truth, gives every Chriſtian the higheſt reaſon to believe it will hold in all the inſtances in which the compariſon is made and ought reaſonably to be interpreted: and from the general reſemblance of the ſubjects, we ſhall find that without either ſtraining the metaphor, or degrading, in any reſpect, the divine perſon and character of our glorious Redeemer, it will apply in more inſtances, and contribute more to illuſtrate this important article of our holy religion, than at firſt view we may be apt to imagine. This declared analogy between the generation of the ſons of men, and that of the Son of God, and the juſt notion wherein generation conſiſts,

ſiſts, muſt be a proper touchſtone for determining the true ground and import of our Saviour's Sonſhip. If in any of the explications that have been given of this article, the eſſential ideas of generation do not apply at all, we need no other evidence that ſuch explications are falſe. The more fully any explication of the ſubject correſponds with thoſe terms in which God has deſcribed it, the greater evidence we ſhall have of its truth; and that which holds in every eſſential point will carry every proof that it is the true one. We go on therefore

III. To ſhew the improper and imperfect ſenſes in which our Saviour has been repreſented as the Son of God, and the miſtaken or inſufficient evidence upon which they have been founded. What ſome of theſe ſenſes are, has been intimated in the Introduction: and many more are to be met with, eſpecially among Socinian writers, who have repreſented their Saviour as the Son of God in every ſenſe imaginable, however nugatory and improper, provided they could deprive him of what is not only his higheſt glory, but the chief ground of his being the begotten Son of God, the divinity of his perſon. But it were trifling to conſider opinions that are not only without all ſhadow of evidence from revelation, or the nature of the thing, but clearly repugnant to both. The chief ſenſes in which with any appearance of evidence Chriſt has been conſidered as the Son of God, are the four following, *viz.* From the generation of his divine perſon by the Father from all eternity. 2. From the miraculous formation of his human nature by the power of God at his incarnation. 3. From his conſecration by God to the character and office of Meſſiah. 4. From his reſurrection by the divine power from the dead, and the dignity and honour to which

he was exalted. These we shall shortly examine in their order, and shall show that none of them answer properly to the character uniformly given him as the begotten Son of God, nor are supported with real evidence from Scripture.

1. The first and most received opinion in which Christ has been believed to be the Son of God, holds him to have been generated as second person of the Godhead by the first person from all eternity, by which the divine essence and perfections were communicated by the first person as the Father to the second, as a Son thus begotten of him. In this sense many of the fathers after the apostolic ages begun incautiously to consider Christ as the Son of God, which paved the way to Arianism. The Nicene and Post-Nicene fathers however adhered to this explication of his Sonship, imagining they could best maintain his coessentiality with the Father in opposition to the Arians upon this ground. In this however there is a real mistake; for though by holding Christ thus begotten of the Father, they seemed to ensure to him the same essence, yet by giving him not an original self-existent, but a derived divinity, they deprived him of some of the most essential characters of supreme Deity, and so exposed the cause they meant to defend. The schoolmen afterwards, founding more upon the fathers and their own metaphysical theories, than upon an accurate study of the sacred oracles, made it the distinguishing character of the first person in the Godhead to generate the second; and the personal property of the second person, that he was generated by the first, and so held Christ to be the Son of God by the generation of his divine person. The divines of the reformed religion adhered to the doctrines of

of the popiſh ſchoolmen in this article, as the beſt ſcheme they yet knew of, for maintaining the divinity of Chriſt againſt the attacks made upon it by Arians and Socinians. By this means the generation of the ſecond perſon in the Godhead by the firſt, hath become a received article in the creeds and confeſſions of the Proteſtant churches; though many of our divines diſtinguiſhed for piety, learning, and orthodoxy, have publickly called its truth and propriety in queſtion. But no church ſince the days of the apoſtles is infallible. Many have erred, and all of them might have erred. The ſcriptures are the only ſure foundation and infallible teſt of revealed religion, and of every article of it. And if we accurately examine this ground of our Saviour's Sonſhip by this unerring ſtandard, we ſhall find that it has neither the propriety nor the evidence that has been generally believed.

Chriſt's Sonſhip, as we have ſhewed already, and will ſhow more fully afterwards, is affirmed of his complex perſon in general, but this theory limits it to one nature only. Generation is not the production of a being that had no kind of exiſtence previous to its generation. But this opinion gives the ſecond perſon no proper and perſonal exiſtence previous to his generation by the Father; for according to it every thing the Son has, is derived from the Father. If it ſhould be ſaid that the divine eſſence pre-exiſted to his generation, the anſwer is obvious, that that eſſence then belonged wholly to the Father, and could not belong to the Son, till once it was conveyed to him, or he produced of it. Generation is the unition of a pre exiſtent, living principle, of the ſame nature, and neceſſary exiſtence as the Father, with an additional ſubſtance derived from the mother;

by which a complex perſon is begotten, poſſeſſing the nature of both parents, and taking his filial name from both. But here the analogy does not hold in any one inſtance, but the ſign totally contradicts the thing ſuppoſed to be ſignified by it. The Son, according to the ſcholaſtic explication, derives his whole eſſence and exiſtence from the Father. He is not only begotten of, but however unintelligible it may ſeem, begotten in the Father. In his generation, no ſubſtance but from the Father is communicated to him. There is no complex perſon formed, no ſecond parent from whom any part of a complex perſon is derived, and no foundation for different filial characters from different parents; for by the ſuppoſition, there is but one parent: ſo that however his production may be called a communication of eſſence or exiſtence to another, it never with propriety can be called a generation: or if it were, the Holy Ghoſt, according to the received opinion of his perſonal proceſſion, would with at leaſt equal propriety be called the Son of the firſt and ſecond, as the ſecond can be called the Son of the firſt perſon.

But as this view of our Saviour's Sonſhip has no probability from the proper notion of generation, ſo it has as little proof from direct Scripture. The divine Logos, or ſecond perſon of the Godhead, makes the principal conſtituent of the Son of God. On this account he is truly God, and the Son of God, and is affirmed to be ſo by the cleareſt evidence revelation can give. But the Scripture no where affirms that he is the Son of God by an eternal generation or production of his divine perſon; nor does it any where lead us to conſider his Sonſhip in that light. The paſſage often quoted in proof of this from Pſ. ii. 7.

"Thou

"Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," considered in itself as expressly denoting a generation in time, considered in connection with both contexts which contain a prediction of the Messiah or Word incarnate, considered in the sense of the Jewish paraphrasts, who all understood it of the Messiah in human nature, and considered in the light in which the inspired apostles considered it, even as descriptive of God manifested in the flesh, Acts xiii. 33. proves no such doctrine as the generation of eternal Deity; but, as we shall afterwards show, puts the Sonship of Christ upon a much more natural, scriptural and proper footing. The eighth chapter of Proverbs has often been brought in proof of this opinion, and particularly these parts of it: "The "Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, "before his works of old. I was set up from "everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the "earth was; when there were no depths I was "brought forth, when he prepared the heavens, "and when he appointed the foundations of the "earth, then I was by him as one brought up "with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoic-"ing always before him, rejoicing in the habi-"table parts of the earth, and my delights were "with the sons of men," *Prov.* viii. 22--31. These words many have thought apply to our Blessed Saviour, and intimate the eternal generation of his divine person, as the Son of God. But this is building more upon them than the foundation will bear. There is perhaps no passage of Scripture of more uncertain and various interpretation than the one here mentioned. Of the most judicious interpreters, ancient and modern, some have understood it only of wisdom considered as a perfection of the Deity, and some of a person

in the Godhead. Of thoſe in the laſt opinion, ſome of the fathers underſtood it of the Son, and ſome of the Holy Spirit. Of thoſe who underſtood it of the Son, ſome applied it to his divine perſon; others extended it alſo to his human nature. The orthodox uſed it to prove Chriſt's eternal exiſtence and ſupreme Divinity; the Arians employed it to prove that his Deity was only created and inferior; ſupported as they thought by the authority of the Septuagent verſion, which renders the word קנה the Lord poſſeſſed me, by ἔκτισε the Lord created me. And of late ſeveral writers from a conviction that it would neither apply well to ſupreme Divinity, nor could ever be underſtood of a created Deity, have conſidered it as importing the antemundane creation and pre-exiſtence of Chriſt's human ſoul in union with the Divine Word, to which all theſe texts would be of more eaſy application. But if we accurately examine this paſſage, we ſhall find with many of the beſt interpreters, that there is no ſolid ground upon which it can be applied to Chriſt at all. Solomon, in this as in moſt parts of this book, is deſcribing and recommending wiſdom; by which he means, as the Jews commonly did, that great intellectual and moral principle in the mind, either of God or man, by which we form the beſt and worthieſt deſigns in mind, and carry them forward into a wiſe and a virtuous courſe of life. To give a clearer and nobler deſcription of this comprehenſive excellence, he by a figure frequent with all writers, and eſpecially with Solomon, wherever wiſdom is his theme, deſcribes her under the image of a living perſon. Thus in the beginning of the chapter he repreſents her as a female, which ſhows he meant only a moral quality

quality or virtue, not the second person of the Godhead, who is always described in the masculine gender, *John* i. 3, 4. Throughout the first part of it he describes the happy influence of wisdom on individuals and kingdoms. To aggrandise our ideas of wisdom, and recommend her more effectually to our approbation and choice, he rises from man to God, and represents wisdom as co essential and co-eval with the Divine Mind itself, called forth to direct his eternal councils, and accompanying every exertion of his power in creating the material, particularly the terrestrial system, and in adapting all things upon it for the benefit of man, who was to be lord of the whole. After which he represents wisdom as calling upon mankind to follow her dictates in all religion and virtue, in opposition to that course of folly and wickedness described before and after it. With this folly wisdom is here plainly contrasted; but that none might be at a loss to know what Solomon meant by it, he tells us in the conclusion of his noble panegyric, "The fear of "the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the "knowledge of the Holy is understanding," chap. ix. 10. Thus there is nothing in this part of Scripture, accurately considered, that indicates any reference to the person of Christ. Its describing him not as a co-agent with God, as all Scripture represents the Divine Word in the works of creation, *John* i. 1, 2, 3. *Col.* i. 16. but as an attendant or companion, strongly intimates, that the wisdom which is common to all the persons in the Deity, not any particular person, was there meant. The total silence of the New Testament directs us to carry it no farther, as neither Christ nor any of his apostles make the remotest reference to it, which we

might have expected they would have done, if it had contained so eminent a proof of his Divinity or of his Sonship as has been afterwards imagined. But if we should even suppose it to relate to this great object, though there is no solid ground for it, yet it must be understood in a sense agreeable to the just import of the original text, agreeable to the nature of its supposed subject, and agreeable to the other passages of Scripture, that treat that subject in a clearer manner, in which case it would neither prove the eternally begotten, yet supreme Deity of the Athanasians, nor the created Deity of the Arians; as, if necessary, or consistent with the brevity of our plan, were easy to demonstrate.

Agur's question related *Prov.* xxx. 4. "What "is his name, or what is his Son's name, if thou "canst tell?" has also been urged in evidence, that Christ is the Son of God, by the generation of his divine person. But this also, when properly examined, falls short of the point. By many of the most judicious interpreters, this passage has been understood to relate not to God, but to man. The Prophet, having been consulted by his scholars Ithiel and Ucal, on many subjects regarding God and his works, he, with that modesty that is ever attendant on true wisdom, expresses his imperfection in knowledge; and that neither he nor any other man that ever lived could fully explain these sublime subjects. For who hath ascended up into heaven, says he, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, if there ever was such a man? or if he himself has been long dead, what is the name of his son or off-spring?

Others

Others finding that the word Ithiel signifies in the Hebrew language, *God with me*; and that Christ seems to have alluded to Agur's question, when he says, no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven, *John* iii. 13. have, by a less natural explication, applied this passage to God and his Son. But in neither of these senses will it prove that the second person of the Godhead derived his divine person by generation from the first. The former sense has not the smallest relation to this subject: and the latter, if we should admit it on its own principles, as prophecied by Agur, and applied by Christ, would represent him as the Son of God; not as God only, but as God-man; or as Christ himself explains it, the Son of man, which includes not only his divine but his human nature.

Several texts have also been brought from the New Testament in proof of this notion of our Saviour's Sonship, but they are equally inconclusive. St. John, when he assures us, that Christ is "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom "of the Father, and who hath declared him," *John* i. 18. affirms Christ to be the begotten Son of God; but not as to his divine person only, as many have injudiciously thought, but as to his complex person: for in that character he had declared God to man, and in that character he had ascended to God, and was then in his bosom. The declaration of our Blessed Saviour, that he and his Father are one, *John* x. 30. proves the unity of their divine essence, demonstrates at the same time that they are different persons, and evinces that they are some-how related as Father and Son; but neither determines the ground of paternal character in the one,

one, nor of filial relation in the other; or if it does, implies that Christ is the Son of God in the complex personage in which he then existed and called God his Father, which, so far from proving the eternal generation of his divine person, proves, as we shall see, something very different. In like manner the passage in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, i. 8. "To the Son he sayeth, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the "sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of righte-"ousness," proves beyond all dispute that the Son of God is God, and that his divine nature is essential to his Sonship and the chief ground of it: but affirms not that he is God's Son in this nature only, or that he holds his divine existence by any act of generation. It is taken from the xlvth *Psalm*, which contains a prophetic description of the person and kingdom of the glorious Messiah, or Word incarnate. In this sense it is applied to Christ by the Apostle, and in place of proving that he became the Son of God, by the eternal generation of his divine person, it proves that he was God, co-essential, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father, and was begotten as his Son, when he was incarnate as Messiah.

Nor will the expressions of Christ's coming forth from the Father, of God's sending his Son into the world, and of the Son of God his being manifested to take away our sins and destroy the works of the devil, prove Christ to have existed as Son of God previous to his incarnation. For these phrases, with equal propriety of language and more consonancy to Scripture, will apply to his appearance as God-man. In common language a man is said to come into the world when he is born; and revelation adopts the common

common language of mankind, to convey its truths to them. Yet that we may have no doubt in a matter of so much importance, it assures us that this and nothing else is the proper meaning of the expressions mentioned. Thus says Christ, "I came forth from the Father and am come "into the world, and I leave the world and go "to the Father," *John* xvi. 28. where, as the last clause plainly describes him as the Word made flesh and dwelling among mankind; so must the first. "As the Father hath sent me "into the world, says Christ, so send I you "into the world," *John* xvii. 13. where the first must relate to the mission of Christ as Messiah the Saviour, as the last expresses Christ's commission to his apostles to be the ministers of his salvation. And when it is said, "the Son of "God was manifested to take away our sins," or "to destroy the works of the devil," 1 *John* iii. 5, 8. the meaning of it is plainly this, that God was then manifested in the flesh, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. for in this complex person only did he appear and accomplish these events. So that these passages, if they denote Christ to be Son of God, hold him forth to be so, not by any generation of him as God from eternity, but as God-man in the fulness of time.

But it is unnecessary to insist longer upon these or other passages from the New Testament, that have been quoted to prove our Saviour the Son of God, as he is second person of the Godhead, begotten of the first from all eternity, as there is no passage in Scripture that holds forth any such doctrine.

That Christ is God, or a divine person coexisting with the other persons in the same Godhead, revelation gives us innumerable evidences: that

that he is a begotten God, or holds his exiſtence, by generation, there is not one. That his character, Son of God, and begotten Son of God, includes his divine perſon, and is founded in the union of that divine perſon with his human nature, the whole tenor of revelation demonſtrates; but it gives us no reaſon to believe him the Son of God in any other ſenſe. Some hundred times is Chriſt mentioned as the Son of God, in the ſacred Scriptures, but never in one inſtance as he is God only. And theſe texts that have been miſapplied to his divine perſon only as God, we ſhall clearly ſhew in the next chapter do all relate to his complex perſon as God-man.

Improbable from the declared ground of our Saviour's Sonſhip, and unproved by any evidence of Scripture, this doctrine has as little ſupport from its congruity to the divine nature, or its neceſſity to preſerve the ſupreme divinity of the Son; but much the contrary. We know little of the divine eſſence and manner of exiſtence, and ſhould ſpeak of them modeſtly. But according to the beſt notions we can form of it, from reaſon or revelation, the Deity muſt be one infinite, immutable, all-perfect, and all bleſſed nature; comprehending in it a Trinity of perſonal ſubſiſtences, co-eſſential with that nature, and with one another, and ſo all of the ſame neceſſary exiſtence, of the ſame ſelf-exiſtence, of the ſame eternity, of the ſame infinite and univerſal perfection with that divine eſſence in which they all exiſt, and with each other as being the ſame in eſſence, and in all eſſential perfections, however diſtinguiſhed in perſonal ſubſiſtence. This puts the doctrine of the Trinity more upon its truly natural and ſcriptural foundation, than the

ſcholaſtic

ſcholaſtic theory admitted into the churches, of one divine perſon begetting another divine perſon, and yet this ſecond divine perſon co-eternal with the firſt who begat him, and theſe divine perſons again producing a third divine perſon, who yet is co-eternal with the former ones, which at firſt ſight ſeems inconſiſtent with the immutability of the divine nature and the ſelf-exiſtence and ſupreme Deity of the Word and Spirit. Such a theogony might eaſily be received by the heathen Polytheiſts, but is without all ſolid foundation in the inſpired oracles. It hath involved the Chriſtian doctrine of the Trinity in difficulties inexplicable: and while it hath been thought to ſtrengthen and ſecure the divinity of the Son, it hath in reality weakened it. It gives him nothing but a derived communicated divinity or divine exiſtence, when all Scripture, and all reaſon as directed by Scripture, holds all real divinity to be equal and the ſame; and by this means it has given a greater advantage to the enemies of our Saviour's Godhead, and of the Chriſtian religion in general, than perhaps any thing beſides.

2. Senſible of the impropriety of this doctrine, and of the inſufficiency of its evidence, others have held Chriſt to be the Son of God from his human nature only, and its miraculous formation by the divine power in the Bleſſed Virgin. This explication has been adopted both by friends and by enemies to our Saviour's divinity: by its friends, to ſecure his ſupreme Deity againſt the objections to it drawn from its being generated by the Father: and by its enemies, to get free of the argument for his real Deity drawn from the ſame generation. The Semiarians, who hold Chriſt to have a divinity, but inferior to ſupreme Godhead,

adhere

adhere to the former explication of his Sonſhip, we have conſidered and expoſed. The Socinians, who deny the proper divinity of their Redeemer altogether, and hold him to be nothing but a creature more exalted and God-like, have embraced the expoſition of it we are now to conſider. But as little can this explication be admitted, if either the teſtimony of revelation, or the nature of the thing is allowed to be deciſive. To ſuppoſe Chriſt to be the Son of God merely from the preternatural formation of his human nature by the divine power, will neither agree with the natural ground and criterion of this character, his generation by the Father, nor is ſupported by proper and direct evidence from Scripture. The character, Son of God, is given in Scripture, to his complex perſon, and ſo includes both the natures that therein co-exiſt. But this explication limits it to one of them, and to the one too which is infinitely the loweſt. Generation requires that the principal conſtituent of the Son be of the ſame nature with his Father, pre-exiſt with him as a living principle in the ſame ſubſtance, and be communicated by him to unite with another nature derived from the mother ſo as to conſtitute the complex perſon generated the Son of both. But in no inſtance will this apply to the mere formation of the human nature of Chriſt. It never was and never can be of the ſame nature with God. It never pre-exiſted in God as a diſtinct yet conſubſtantial principle in his eſſence. It never was communicated from that eſſence to the Virgin Mother, ſo as to denominate her Son in any propriety of language the begotten Son of God. His human ſoul, as it was to exiſt in union with a divine perſon, we may well believe was created a ſpirit of the no-

bleſt

bleſt nature and the higheſt endowments. But, as all the characters formerly mentioned as belonging to it teſtify, it was ſtill but a creature, however exalted. As all others ſpirits were, and as all finite ſpirits muſt be, it was created from non-exiſtence into being by his almighty power: This therefore was not a generation, but a creation; and being common to Chriſt with every individual of the human kind could not confer upon him the peculiar and diſtinguiſhing character, the only begotten Son of God. His body too was foretold to be prepared by God, *Pſal.* xl. 6. *Heb.* x. 5. and was formed by the power of the Holy Spirit, *Luke* i. 35. But this, though a ſupernatural formation, was not a proper generation. The originating principle of his body was not of the ſubſtance of the Divine Spirit, nor conveyed from him, but organized of the ſubſtance of the Virgin Mary. If this were meant of his generation, it would make Chriſt as much the Son of the third as of the firſt perſon, which is never affirmed of him. But it can no more be called a generation, and contains nothing more divine than the formation of the body of Adam from the earth, or of Eve of a part from Adam's ſide, which perſons, though ſons of God by creation, never are and never can be called his begotten children.

As this opinion has not the ſmalleſt evidence from the nature of generation, it has as little from expreſs declarations of Scripture. Theſe divine oracles always include Chriſt's humanity in their repreſentations of his Sonſhip, but never reſt it on that nature alone. They inform us that the Holy Ghoſt came upon the Bleſſed Virgin, and that the power of the Higheſt did overſhadow her, and that therefore alſo, or upon this account,

count, in connection with some higher one, that holy thing that should be born of her should be called the Son of God, *Luke* i. 35. They assure us, it was God's Son whom the husbandmen agreed among themselves to kill, *Luke* xx. 13, 14. God's Son, who as to his human nature while on earth, knew not the time appointed of God for the judgment of the world, *Mark* xiii. 32. the Son of God, whom God spared not but delivered him up for us all, *Rom.* viii. 32. and through whose death, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God, *Rom.* v. 10. All these Scriptures evince that the Son of God possesses a human as well as a divine nature, and some of them that his person, as Son, consists of both. But that this distinguishing incommunicable character of the begotten, the only begotten Son of God is founded merely in the formation of his human nature, no revelation of God has declared, the nature of the thing does not admit, and no judicious man will believe. The former opinion placed the foundation of his Sonship too high, to consist with his self existent and supreme Divinity; this places it too low, to constitute the high character of the begotten Son of God. The first, from being God necessarily existent, and co eternal with the other persons, reduces him to a generated, derived and dependent divinity. The second, of man, raises him to be the begotten Son of God, which Scripture and reason assure us, must imply divinity. And both separate what they ought to have conjoined, and rest his Sonship on one of his natures, when, as we shall show, it consists in the proper conjunction of them.

3. Convinced therefore that in neither of these views Christ can justly be considered as the Son

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of God, others have applied this distinguishing character to the office of Messiah or Mediator, with which he was by the Father invested. This opinion many of the Socinians have embraced, that it might free them from believing their Saviour's divinity, against which, in opposition to Scripture, in opposition to the general faith of the Christian church, and in opposition to the natural propension of mankind, to glory in the dignity of the author of their religion, these strange Christians have a most unreasonable prejudice. Some of the firmest friends of our Lord's divinity have of late also espoused this explication of his Sonship, rather than admit either of the former ones, which are neither probable in themselves, nor proved by Scripture. This explication has indeed one advantage over both the preceeding ones, viz. that it holds Christ in his whole mediatorial person to be the Son of God, as the Scripture clearly holds him to be, and so includes both his natures, one or other of which the former opinions left out. Yet it labours under a greater inconvenience and impropriety than either of them: it confounds the most distinct personal with a merely official title: it overlooks the substantial person evidently characterized in Scripture as God's begotten Son, and applies a personal name, not to the person it describes, but to the office he bears. This opinion, though patronized by names I much love and honour, is without all solid foundation, either in the object it relates to, or in the declarations of Scripture. It applies most improperly to the term Son, and is totally inconsistent with the title of a begotten, an only begotten one. In the former explication the characteristical ground of our Saviour's filiation and person, might have some application, though very

very imperfect; but in this it can have none. Every idea of generation and Sonſhip is totally excluded, and the moſt expreſs and uniform declarations of them in Scripture are intirely perverted into metaphor and impropriety.

As this opinion is inconſiſtent with the general terms in which revelation affirms and explains our Saviour's ſonſhip, it cannot be expected to have ſupport from any particular parts of it. Thoſe words of our Bleſſed Saviour to the Jews, "Say ye of him whom the Father hath ſanctified "and ſent into the world, thou blaſphemeſt, be- "cauſe I ſaid I am the Son of God," *John* x. 36, have been often adduced in proof of this doctrine, but do not prove it. Our Saviour in his public diſcourſe had called God his Father, and affirmed that he and his Father were one, ver. 30. The Jews thereupon accuſed him of blaſphemy, who being in their apprehenſion a man only, called himſelf God and the Son of God. Jeſus, in vindication of what he had ſaid, refers his adverſaries to a part of their own inſpired writings, *Pſalm* lxxxii. 6. where princes or prophets to whom the word of God came, inveſting them with theſe offices, are called Gods and children of the Moſt High: and if ſuch perſons, from their mere commiſſion from God, and in language plainly metaphorical, were called children of God, much more may he whom the Father had ſanctified or conſecrated to the office of Meſſiah by the union of a divine perſon with his holy human nature, *Luke* i. 35. and who as his begotten Son was ſent into the world, affirm himſelf to be the Son of God. They were God's ſons by conſecration and office, he was God's Son by generation alſo and in perſon. They became the ſons of God after they came into the world,

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and when called to their office; Christ was born into the world in this character, and held it not by his consecration, at his baptism, as some have imagined, but was the Son of God, as the Scripture often testifies, from his conception and birth. Their sonship, like the divinity there ascribed to them, was merely figurative, but his was natural and proper. This sonship Christ did not think fit at that time particularly to explain, any more than his essential unity with his Father. But from the general characters in which he describes it as being brought with him into the world, he intimates, it was not merely official and metaphorical, like that of the persons he refers to, but that he was the Son of God, not in that only, but in a much higher sense, and which can apply to none but himself, his truly begotten and proper Son. Many passages of Scripture affirm the Son of God to be the Messiah, and call Messiah, or Christ, the Son of God. These shew that the characters Son of God and Messiah apply to the same person, but not that they are applied to him on the same ground. The first relates to his person, and denotes his filial relation to his Father: the second expresses his office, and that to that office he was anointed and consecrated by him. His being consecrated to the office of Mediator may imply that he is the Son of God, for none else can possess that character and discharge the offices of it; but it is never assigned in Scripture, and in the nature of things never can be assigned as the foundation of his Sonship.

4. One explication more has been given of our Saviour's Sonship that merits any consideration, which is, that he is so called on account of his resurrection by the divine power from the dead. But

But this is equally improper and unsupported as the former. He was "declared to be the Son "of God with power, according to the spirit of "holiness by his resurrection from the dead," *Rom.* i. 4. But this did not make him God's Son, but only declared him to be so. He is called the first-begotten and the first-born from the dead, *Rev.* i. 18. and 5. for the word in both places is the same. But this does not express that proper generation by which he became the Son of God, for God, angels and men, had all ascribed this generation and Sonship to him before. This generation we shall see commenced at his incarnation, when the divine eternal Word was made flesh; and as he resumed this flesh, and entered anew upon his complete life, his resurrection is represented as a sort of regeneration. It did not constitute him the Son of God, but only refers us to the proper ground of it, His incarnation declares this character, Son of God, to belong to Christ, and raises Christ to the honour due to this character. These things are so evident in themselves as to require no confirmation. Christ is God's begotten Son, which his resurrection did attest, and necessarily supposed, but could not constitute. And he is called his only begotten Son, by which he is personally distinguished and exalted above the whole creation; but multitudes rose with him at his resurrection, and the whole world shall be raised by him at the last day. Such are the chief opinions upon this long debated subject. They have all arisen from inaccurate ideas of generation, a partial view of the glorious person it is affirmed of, and an attention only to those Scriptures that seemed in any degree to support the different

theories which different writers have adopted on this article, without conſidering the doctrine of Scripture in general. None of them agree with the declared ground of our Saviour's Sonſhip, his proper generation by the Father. None of them are ſupported by any clear, general and conſiſtent voice of revelation. Some of them are altogether falſe and foreign to the ſubject; and thoſe which have any relation to it, exhibit often ſuch miſtaken, and always ſuch imperfect views of it, as come greatly ſhort of the real truth. But the proper exhibition and eſtabliſhment of this point ſhall be the ſubject of the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

Of the proper and Scriptural Senſe in which Chriſt Jeſus is the Son of God.

I Have proved that in the perſon of our Bleſſed Saviour, there co-exiſt two diſtinct natures, divinity and humanity, with all the eſſential properties belonging to each. I have ſhowed that this complex perſon is called the Son of God, his proper, his begotten; his peculiar, his only begotten Son. I have aſcertained the proper notion of generation, and have expoſed the improper and unſcriptural ſenſes in which this character of our Saviour has been hitherto explained. I proceed now to ſhow directly in what ſenſe Chriſt is the Son of God, and to eſtabliſh this point by unqueſtionable evidence.

1. Son is a perſonal name, and muſt therefore be underſtood as relating immediately to the perſon of Chriſt. As this glorious perſon contains two natures, the divine and the human, he can be conceived to be the Son of God in three reſpects, and in three only. Theſe are, the generation of his divinity, as ſecond perſon in the Godhead; the ſupernatural formation of his human nature, by the power of God; or, laſtly, the unition of theſe two natures in his incarnation, producing his complex perſon, as God-man. The firſt we have ſhowed is too high to conſiſt with the equal divinity, eternity, and ſelf-exiſtence, which every perſon in the ſame immutable Deity muſt poſſeſs. The ſecond is too low to found the high character which, in ſupereminence to God's whole created offſpring, is

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aſcribed to Chriſt, even that he is God's only begotten Son. A generated God ſeems ſo repugnant to our beſt notions of Deity, that as men we can never conceive it; and having no real foundation in Scripture, as Chriſtians we cannot believe it. A generated man, if a man only, and begotten of man, we can eaſily comprehend; but a mere man, begotten by God, is inconceivable and impoſſible; and therefore Chriſt can as little be the Son of God in this reſpect. But as theſe ſeem both of them impoſſible, ſo both of them are repugnant to every idea of generation, which the Scripture always aſſigns as the proper ground of the Sonſhip of Chriſt. A generation of the firſt perſon by the ſecond might be a production; or if in the ſame numerical eſſence, would be a reproduction of the ſame eſſence under another ſubſiſtence, not a generation. In like manner the production of Chriſt's human nature may be called a creation, with regard to his ſoul, and a formation, with reſpect to his body; but neither can be called a generation; much leſs ſuch a generation as could conſtitute him the Son of God, which requires him to have a divine conſtituent principle, and that principle communicated from the Father. But as theſe explications are incompatible with the natures of Chriſt, ſo we have ſhowed they have as little conſiſtency with, or evidence from, Scripture. As both his Deity and humanity unite in the perſon of Chriſt, the Son of God is ſometimes characteriſed from the one nature, and ſometimes from the other. And this is one chief reaſon why different and oppoſite theoriſts have not only gone into different opinions, but have ſome appearance of evidence from Scripture in ſupport of them. But though revelation ſometimes holds forth the

Son of God in one nature and ſometimes in another, it never, in one inſtance, reſtricts his Sonſhip to either of theſe natures alone, but always includes alſo the other nature. This we ſhowed in all thoſe paſſages that proved Chriſt, in his general perſon, to be the Son of God, and will ſhow more fully in the ſequel of this chapter. But what does all this import? If, according to the cleareſt dictates of reaſon and revelation, Chriſt neither is nor can be the Son of God in the firſt nor in the ſecond of theſe ſenſes mentioned, he muſt be ſo in the third. If he is not the Son of God from the generation either of his divine or of his human nature, he muſt of neceſſity be his Son on account of the proper conjunction of them in one complex perſon, for there is no other perſonal reſpect in which this perſonal and relative name can be given him.

2. That Chriſt is the Son of God in this ſenſe will be farther evident when it is conſidered that this agrees perfectly with the notion of generation, which is uniformly declared in Scripture to be the foundation of our Saviour's Sonſhip, and conſequently is the criterion and teſt by which the proper ſenſe of this character muſt be determined. Without this eſſential criterion every theory that can be adopted is rendered incapable of other proof. But poſſeſſed of this, an explication of this article is not only ſuſceptible of other Scriptural evidence, but carries the fundamental evidence of its truth in its own boſom. The want of this muſt for ever reprobate the former explications; for to none of them would the eſſential ideas of generation apply. But what confirms this ſenſe is, that the character of a begotten Son requires this explication; it can hold with propriety in no other; and holds in this with amazing

amazing exactneſs, in every proper and neceſſary point of compariſon. Thus for inſtance does generation ſignify not a production of a ſubſtance, or even of a ſimple perſon that had no exiſtence before, but the production of a complex perſon from a pre-exiſtent living principle; the perſon of Chriſt is chiefly conſtituted of the pre-exiſtent eternal Logos, or ſecond perſon in the Godhead. Does the pre-exiſtent principle exiſt in the general ſubſtance of the Father, and partake of the ſame nature under a different ſubſiſtence; the ſecond perſon of the Godhead poſſeſſes the ſame nature, and what is more, the ſame numerical nature with the firſt, and poſſeſſes that nature alſo under a diſtinct perſonal ſubſiſtence. Is the pre-exiſtent living principle in human generation, not the reſult of the Father's will, nor dependent upon it for exiſtence, but exiſts in and with him, by the ſame law or neceſſity of nature as himſelf exiſts; ſo the divine Logos co-exiſts with the other divine perſons in the ſame divine eſſence, and by the ſame neceſſity of nature, by which the divinity in general, and every perſonal ſubſiſtence in that divinity does exiſt. Does human generation conſiſt in the unition of this original living principle, with an acceſſary ſubſtance derived from the female parent; or in an acceſſion of ſuch ſubſtance to the original principle; ſo this divine generation conſiſts in the unition of the divine Logos, not only with a human ſoul created by God, but with a human body alſo derived from the ſubſtance of the Bleſſed Virgin, and both united with the Divine Word. Is this addition to the original principle made by the generation of the Father, the conception of the mother, and the energy of the living principle; ſo God the Father, by whoſe peculiar agency this human nature was formed and united to his

Divine Word, is affirmed to have begotten this glorious perſon, *Pſalm* ii. 6. The Bleſſed Virgin of whom his body was formed is ſaid to have conceived and born him, *Iſaiah* vii. 14. And the Word to have partook of human nature, and to be made in human fleſh, *Heb.* ii. 14. *John* i. 14. From this unition of the original principle with the acceſſary ſubſtance, is there conſtituted and produced a more viſible and complex perſon, poſſeſſing the nature of both parents, and taking its denomination of Son from both, but chiefly from the Father, from whom the chief conſtituent of its perſon was derived; ſo from the incarnation of the Divine Word, is conſtituted the complex perſon of Immanuel, partaking perfectly the nature of God and of man, called not unfrequently nor improperly the Son of Man, yet chiefly and moſt frequently the Son of God. Is a Son ſprung of both parents the beſt pledge of their love, ſo we ſhall find this glorious God-man is the beſt pledge of friendſhip between God and man, and formed for every office of Mediator betwixt them. Such is the amazing agreement between the incarnation of the Divine Word and human generation. To no other view of our Saviour's perſon that ever has been given do theſe primary evidences of his Sonſhip apply. To no other view that can be given of him can they apply. In every eſſential and neceſſary point do they apply to our Saviour's incarnation, and the conſtitution of his complex perſon, which we have here aſſigned as the foundation of his Sonſhip, and therefore they furniſh a moſt convincing evidence that in this ſenſe, and in this only, is Chriſt Jeſus the Son of God.

3. Let us conſult at large the ſacred oracles, and we ſhall find them giving their unanimous declaration in proof of this doctrine.

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The essential ideas of generation, by which our Saviour's Sonship is defined in Scripture, are the first and general marks by which we are to determine the true ground of this distinguishing title. But we are not wholly left to such physiological analogies to investigate and ascertain a truth of such infinite and universal importance to mankind. Besides these general characteristics of our Saviour's Sonship, God hath given us many particular and clear declarations of Scripture, describing the person to whom this character, Son of God, belongs, and directing us to judge upon what ground he possesses it. Let us then consider accurately the Scriptures of truth, and we shall find that whenever the blessed Jesus is described as the Son of God, it is with regard to his complex person, and whenever he is characterized as the begotten Son of God, it is in regard to the production of that complex person, by the unition of the two natures of which it is composed.

One of the first and most noted declarations of our Saviour's Sonship is that prophetic one given of him by his divine Father himself, *Psalm.* ii. 7. "Thou art my Son, this "day have I begotten thee." This Psalm, as every part of it indicates, and the best interpreters are agreed, contains a prediction of the glorious prince Messiah, God in our nature. The words quoted declare him to be God's Son, his begotten Son, begotten however, not from eternity, but expressly affirmed to be begotten this day, even at that auspicious æra when he was to appear as Messiah, and when the other events here predicted of him in that character were also to be accomplished. In this clear and natural sense the Jewish paraphrasts understood this passage; as Tehillim Rabbathi, the Midrash, Abenezra,

and other expoſitors of it teſtify. But what is an infinitely higher confirmation, and muſt put the true meaning and application of it beyond all diſpute is, that an inſpired Apoſtle has frequently quoted this Pſalm, and this particular paſſage of it, as predictive of our Saviour, and never underſtood it as applying to him before, but only after, his incarnation. *Acts* xiii. 33. *Heb.* i. 5. and v. 5. In the 89th Pſalm, which in its ultimate ſenſe both Jews and Chriſtians have ever conſidered as prophetical of the Son of God, Chriſt is foretold as ſaying to his Father, "Thou art my "Father, my God, and the rock of my ſalva-"tion," and his Father as promiſing that he would "make him his firſt-born, higher than the "kings of the earth," *Pſalm* lxxxix. 26, 27. All which agree neither with his divine perſon only, or with his human nature only, but moſt exactly with his complex perſon, and ſo indicate that God is his Father, and he the Son of God in that reſpect.

Iſaiah, as directed of God, thus foretells the birth and character of this Son of God, and reſts both upon the ſame foundation. "Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a Son, and ſhall call his name Immanuel," Iſaiah vii. 14. who, as his name imports, and the inſpired Evangeliſt hath rendered it, *Matt.* i. 23, is God with us. Accordingly, when the ſame evangelic prophet deſcribes this perſon as born and manifeſted, he ſays, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is "given;" clearly implying that as in human generation a child is not called a ſon till it is born, ſo neither did Chriſt become the Son, either of God or of man, untill the generation and birth of his perſon as Immanuel. Correſpondent to this generation, and to the complex perſon generated,

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are the names and offices by which he is immediately described. "The government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the prince of peace, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end." *Isaiah* ix. 6, 7. All which characters apply to his complex person, and to that only, and so all intimate that the Son here foretold, was to be God and Man in one person, and that by the unition of these two natures in the Virgin's womb was this wonderful and glorious person to be procreated. If from the Jewish we come forward to the Christian revelation, we shall find this fundamental article of revealed religion ascertained by still clearer and more decisive evidence.

When the Angel Gabriel foretells to the Blessed Virgin our Saviour's conception and birth, he says, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and "bring forth a son, and shalt call his name "Jesus; he shall be great, and shall be called "the Son of the Highest:" that is, according to the sacred language, which calleth persons and things what they really are, he shall be the Son of God Most High; "And the Lord God shall "give unto him the throne of his Father David, "and he shall reign over the house of Judah for "ever and ever, and of his kingdom there shall "be no end," *Luke* i. 31—33. This is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophesy, and the glorious Immanuel is now to be conceived and brought forth; who is called, in the same person, the Son of God Most High, and the Son of David; which plainly intimates that his Sonship, both divine and human, apply to him as God-man; and consequently that his generation consists in the uni-

tion of these natures in his complex person. The astonished Virgin having asked how this mysterious generation and conception should be effected, the Angel answers her in terms which both explain and confirm this important truth. "The "Holy Ghost (says he) shall come upon thee," viz. to form the Saviour's body of thy substance, as the Father, we may believe, created his human soul. It is added, "and the power of the High-"est shall overshadow the." This Divine Power is distinguished from the Spirit, and is, I think, to be understood not merely of the omnipotence of God, but of the second person in the Godhead, who in the Scriptures and the ancient church, both Jewish and Christian, was often represented as the Power of God; and who, notwithstanding he was to have a principal concern here, is not otherwise mentioned. "The substantial Power of the Most High or "divine Logos shall overshadow thee," and assume into personal union with himself this soul and body formed by the other persons; in consequence of all which, adds the Angel, that holy thing generated in or born of thee, shall be called the Son of God, *Luke* i. 34, 35.

St. John, when he treats of our Saviour's person, represents his Sonship in the very same light. "In the beginning (says he) was the "Word, and the Word was with God, and "the Word was God," *John* i. 1, 2. Here is his proper character as second person in the Godhead, distinct in subsistence from the other persons, yet of the same divine essence. But how does this divine person, coeternal and co-essential with the first, become the Son of God? Of this St. John clearly informs

forms us at the 14th verſe: "The Word (ſays he) "was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us, and we "beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begot-"ten of the Father," and who had become ſuch, by this acceſſion of humanity, by the Divine Power, to his original divinity, as is plainly intimated. Accordingly, this apoſtle, who had repeatedly called Chriſt before his incarnation, the Word, as uniformly after it, calls him the Son, and the only begotten Son of God, *John* i. 18.—iii. 16, 17. In like manner when he repreſents the Trinity in their proper divine characters bearing witneſs to this great truth, that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, 1 *John* v. 7. he repreſents them not as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt; but as the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt; by which that inſpired apoſtle ſtill ſhows that by the Word he meant Chriſt's divine perſon as ſecond ſubſiſtence in the Godhead, and by Son of God, his complex perſon as God-man, the Saviour of the world.

When Chriſt was ſolemnly conſecrated to his office of mediator at his baptiſm, the Father declared from heaven, in ſuch language as all preſent might be ſuppoſed to underſtand, that this perſon in human nature, who was now baptized, was his beloved Son, *Matth.* iii. 17. When the ſame Jeſus was afterwards transfigured upon the mount, God his Father, with ſimilar clearneſs and ſolemnity, repeated his atteſtation to this character, *Matth.* xvii. 5. uniformly declaring him his Son, in the character he then appeared in, as the Word made fleſh, and dwelling among mankind.

The ſame is the account of his filial perſon and character given us by Chriſt himſelf, who,

all will acknowledge, muſt have well known it. Having aſked the blind man whom he had cured, if he believed on the Son of God? the man anſwers, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on "him?" Jeſus replies, "Thou haſt both ſeen "him, and it is he that talketh with thee," *John* xi. 35—37. And when ſolemnly addreſſing his Father in proſpect of his laſt ſufferings, and of the glory that was to follow, he ſays, "Father, "the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son "alſo may glorify thee," *John* xvii. 1. in both which inſtances he clearly applies the title Son of God to his complex perſon, and the filial relation it had given him to God as his Father.

In the ſame view do the Apoſtles uniformly conſider their maſter as the Son of God. Thus when Chriſt aſked them, whom ſay ye that I am? Peter, in his own name, and in the name of the whole, replied, "Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God." *Matthew* xvi. 16. St. Paul writing to the Romans, affirms, that the Son of God, Chriſt Jeſus, "was made of the ſeed of David according to the fleſh, but was declared to be the Son of God by his reſurrection from the dead," *Rom.* i. 3. 4. Writing to the Galatians he ſays, that "when the fulneſs of the time "was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a "woman." In which paſſages he clearly ſhews that the character, Son of God, denotes his complex perſon; and that by the ſame incarnation, by which he became the Son of man, he became alſo, and at the ſame time, the Son of God. But in the firſt chapter of his Epiſtle to the Hebrews, he not only affirms, but by a chain of evidence demonſtrates this important truth. To confirm his believing countrymen in the Chriſtian faith, and to convert the unbelievers, who denied

Jeſus

Jeſus of Nazareth to be the Son of God, the Apoſtle begins with aſcertaining the Sonſhip and perſonal dignity of Chriſt, and his infinite ſuperiority both to angels, and to thoſe men by whom the Jewiſh religion was introduced or ſupported, thereby effectually to recommend to them the religion of Jeſus. He tells them that "God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto them by "his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all "things," which implies that the Son of God is man, for as God he has a natural right to all things; yet to ſhow that this Son was God as well as man, it is added, that by him "God made the "worlds," pointing him out as God's co-eſſential Memra or Logos, by whom the Jews believed all things were created. This Son the Apoſtle farther deſcribes as "the brightneſs of his Fa-"ther's glory, and the expreſs image of his per-"ſon, and upholding all things by the word of "his power," which muſt relate chiefly to his divinity. Yet to ſhow that this ſame Son of God contained a human as well as a divine nature, he deſcribes him alſo as "purging our "ſins, and then ſitting down on the right hand "of the Majeſty on high," which plainly includes his human nature, verſe 3. He explains in the ſame ſenſe, and applies to the ſame complex perſon of Chriſt, as we have done, that paſſage in the 2d Pſalm, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:" Which explication he farther confirms from the promiſe of the Meſſiah made by God unto David, and of whom Solomon was a type, 2 *Sam.* vii. 14. "I will "be to him a father, and he ſhall be to me a ſon," predicting the generation and appearance of the Son of God, in that future period when he ſhould be born into the world. He tells us, ver.

ver. 6. that "when God bringeth in the firſt-"begotten into the world, he ſaith, let all the "angels of God worſhip him," which ſhows, that though as ſecond perſon in the Godhead, he was prior to all creatures, and created them, yet as Son of God, or the firſt begotten, he was poſterior to the angels; and when he was brought forth in that character, at his incarnation on this earth, and exhibited in his proper glory at his aſcenſion into heaven, all the angelic tribes were commanded to worſhip him. At the 8th verſe he repreſents God the Father addreſſing his exalted Son, in that noble prophetic deſcription of him contained in the 45th Pſalm, "To the Son he "ſaith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" which declares in higheſt terms his divinity: yet it is added, "A ſceptre of righteouſneſs is the "ſceptre of thy kingdom, thou loveſt righteouſ-"neſs and hateſt iniquity, therefore God, even "thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of "gladneſs above thy fellows;" which as clearly affirms alſo his humanity; and both theſe natures being by God affirmed of him as his Son, proves, if the teſtimony of God, and his inſpired ſervants can prove it, that in both theſe natures, Jeſus is the Son of God.

Such are the numerous, clear and demonſtrative proofs revelation gives us, that Chriſt as God-man is the Son of God, and that his generation conſiſted in the unition of the ſecond perſon in the Godhead, with his human nature at his incarnation. Many of theſe paſſages clearly determine the Son's generation, to the incarnation of the Divine Word: all of them hold forth Chriſt to be the Son of God, as he is God in our nature, which proves his generation to be the ſame. And of the numerous other paſſages

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of Scripture that mention Chriſt as the Son of God, there is not one that I can find that repreſents him in this character either as he is God only, or man only, but all of them, as he is God-man, the Son of both, and the friend of both.

4. What further proves Chriſt to be the Son of God, as he is God-man, is, that the name Son of God, is in Scripture joined with all thoſe other characters of Chriſt, both perſonal and official, which deſcribe our Saviour in his complex perſon. Theſe characters are the Son of Man, Chriſt or Meſſiah, Jeſus or the Saviour, together with the offices he executes in effecting our ſalvation. All theſe deſcribe our Saviour in his compound perſon; and if we conſult the Scriptures, we ſhall find, that with all theſe the term Son of God is joined, and always uſed as deſcriptive of the ſame perſon to which theſe are aſcribed.

The ſame perſon who is called the Son of God, is called too the Son of Man. Thus, the ſame child Jeſus, whom the Virgin was to bear, the angel declares ſhould be both "the Son of "the Higheſt, and the Son of David," *Luke* i. 32. When our Bleſſed Saviour aſked his diſciples, "Whom do men ſay, that I the Son of Man am? "Peter anſwered, thou art Chriſt the Son of the "living God," *Matth.* xvi. 13, 16. which our Saviour ſuſtaining, confirmed the declaration of his apoſtle, that the titles, Son of God and Son of Man, were convertible terms, as though they repreſented him as differently related, yet they were both expreſſive of the ſame perſon. Accordingly Jeſus himſelf being interrogated by the High Prieſt, whether he was the Son of God? acknowledged he was, yet affirmed he was alſo the Son of Man; for both were characters

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of the ſame perſon of Meſſiah, *Matth.* xxvi. 63, 64. St. Paul affirms Chriſt to be in the ſame perſon, made of the ſeed of David, and the Son of God, *Rom.* i. 3, 4. And St. John has the ſame viſion, and gives the very ſame deſcription of the Son of God, *Rev.* ii. 18. that he had received and given of the Son of Man, *Chap.* i. 13—15. *viz.* That his eyes were like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine braſs, both which correſpond exactly with the viſion and prophetic deſcription of the Saviour given by Daniel, *Chap.* x. 5, 6. and all of them evince the Son of God and the Son of Man to be the ſame perſon, and conſequently that this perſon along with his divine, includes alſo a human nature.

The ſame perſon who is called the Son of God, is called Meſſiah, or Chriſt; which though the firſt denotes his perſon, and the ſecond his office; yet theſe being indifferently predicated of the ſame perſon, ſhow that perſon to be the ſame. Thus in the ſecond Pſalm, the ſame perſon, who is called משיחו, God's Meſſiah, or anointed, ver. 2. and who at ver. 6. is prophetically declared to be anointed king of Zion, is at ver. 7. called his Son, his begotten Son. Upon this and their ſubſequent revelations, the Jews underſtood the terms Son of God and Meſſiah as always deſcriptive of the ſame perſon. Thus Nathaniel is no ſooner ſatisfied that Jeſus was the promiſed Meſſiah, than he declares, "Rabbi, thou art the "Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael," *John* i. 49. The High Prieſt adjured our Saviour to tell him, whether he was the Chriſt, the Son of God, when Jeſus declares he was, confirming at once the identity of perſon to whom theſe characters were given and appropriating both to himſelf, *Matth.* xxvi. 63, 64. Inſtructed

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by the national religion, and much confirmed in this truth by their divine maſter, the diſciples of Chriſt uniformly applied theſe characters to the ſame perſon. Martha being interrogated by our Saviour of her belief in him, anſwered, "Lord "I believe that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of "God, which ſhould come into the world," *John* xi. 27. And the Twelve, when he aſked them who they thought he was, immediately replied, "We believe and are ſure, that thou art "that Chriſt, the Son of the living God," *John* vi. 6. therein expreſſing both the Jewiſh and the Chriſtian faith, which held theſe titles to be but different names of the ſame perſon.

The Scriptures apply the name Son of God, to the ſame perſon who is called Jeſus or the Saviour. Thus Mark intitles his Goſpel, "The "book of the generation of Jeſus Chriſt the Son "of God," *Mark* i. 1. St. John, when he wrote for the general inſtruction of the Chriſtian world, concludes his Goſpel by declaring, That "theſe "things are written that ye may believe that "Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God," *John* xx. 31. And in one of his Epiſtles, he ſays, "We have "ſeen and do teſtify that the Father ſent the Son "to be the Saviour of the world," 1 *John* iv. 14. And Paul repreſents the Theſſalonians as waiting for God's Son from heaven, even Jeſus who hath delivered us from the wrath to come, 1 *Theſ.* i. 10. By which they clearly intimate that the names Jeſus and Son of God are characteriſtical of the ſelf-ſame perſon.

This name Son of God is alſo applied to every office Chriſt performed, every bleſſing he hath procured, and every honour he is raiſed to in his complex perſon. Thus, was he made of a woman, and made under the law, it was the Son of God who

who was so made, *Gal.* iv. 4. Was he at his entrance upon his ministry baptized with water, by John Baptist, and by his Father with the Holy Spirit; both joined in affirming it was the Son of God who was then baptized, *John* i. 34. *Matt.* iii. 17. Did he as our great prophet declare to us God and his will, it was the only begotten Son who declared him, *John* i. 18. Was he made a great high priest, as Son he was made an high priest, *Heb.* v. 5. Did God not spare him but deliver him up for us all; it was his Son he delivered up, *Rom.* viii. 31. Did he raise Jesus from the dead, it was his Son he raised up, *Acts* iii. 26. And did he glorify him whom the Jews delivered up, and denied in the presence of Pilate; it was his Son Jesus who was denied by man, but whom God glorified, ver. 13. Are we cleansed by his blood from all sin; it is the blood of Jesus Christ his Son that cleanseth us, 1 *John* i. 7.

But what does all this infer? If the title, Son of God, is definitive of the same precise person, as the title Son of Man, Messiah or Christ, Jesus or the Saviour; if it is applied to all that Christ became, did, and suffered for our salvation; and do all these characters and offices express his complex person as God-man Mediator; then it follows by unavoidable consequence that the same complex person who is the Son of Man, Messiah, the Saviour, is the Son of God. The Prophets foretold these to be the same person: the Jews expected them to be the same. Neither Christ nor his apostles hinted the smallest difference or distinction betwixt them, which we may be sure they would have done, had any distinction existed. On the contrary, our Blessed Saviour, and every inspired writer of the New as well as of the Old Testament, with unanimous and uniform

form conſent, apply theſe characters to the ſame perſon; and conſequently teach us, that he became the begotten Son of God, when he was conceived and born as the Son of Man, and that his generation conſiſted in the unition of the divine Logos with our human nature.

Nor to elude the force of this, or the other arguments from Scripture in ſupport of this doctrine, can it with reaſon be ſaid, that Chriſt having been the Son of God by the eternal generation of his divine perſon, and that divine perſon conſtituting the chief part of his complex perſon, continues to give a name to the whole. For, 1. we have no evidence, that his divine perſon was generated from eternity by the Father, or that he is the Son of God in that ſenſe. We have already ſhewed that ſuch an opinion is without all foundation in Scripture, and inconſiſtent with that co-eternal and co-eſſential exiſtence which is aſcribed to the divine Word, equally as to the other perſons in the Godhead. To believe Chriſt then to be the Son of God in this ſenſe, is to believe without evidence, either from revelation or reaſon; and therefore the objection is a mere *petitio principii*, a begging the queſtion, as Logicians call it. 2. Every paſſage of Scripture that holds forth Chriſt as Son of God, holds him forth as ſuch in his complex perſon; and every inſpired writer that declares his generation, places it in the procreation of that perſon, by the incarnation of the divine Word. And we have ſhown, that in this, and no other poſſible ſenſe, can the eſſential ideas of generation apply to him. To believe Chriſt then to be the Son of God by the eternal generation of his divine perſon, is to believe not only without proper evidence, but to believe contrary

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to the cleareſt evidence revelation or the nature of the thing can give us. 3. We have every reaſon to believe, that theſe declarations of Scripture which repreſent Chriſt to be the Son of God, as he is God-man, were meant by God, and ſhould be underſtood by us, in their moſt obvious meaning. The God of truth and grace uniformly reveals his Son Meſſiah as Saviour of the world. Chriſt when he appeared, and converſed bodily with mankind, affirmed himſelf in that viſible perſonality, to be the Son of God. All his apoſtles affirm the ſame; and aſcribe every thing he did, every thing he ſuffered, every bleſſing of ſalvation he purchaſed, to him as Son of God. In his name, as Son of God our Saviour, all mankind, the moſt ſimple and illiterate, as well as the moſt judicious and learned, are required, as they would obtain his ſalvation, to believe. Is there any truth then, that we may preſume is more clearly revealed, and when revealed, is more to be underſtood in its plain and obvious meaning, than this moſt important one? ſurely not. Had Chriſt been the Son of God in the ſenſe ſuppoſed, it would have been clearly and univerſally revealed; and the evidence of his being ſo, as God-man, would have been ſo ſlender, as would eaſily have been accounted for, upon the principle ſuggeſted. But when there is no convincing evidence, that he is the Son of God, as he is God only, but the fulleſt evidence the whole tenor of divine revelation can give, that he is the Son of God, as he is God-man, we muſt neceſſarily found his Sonſhip in that character, and in that alone: for never can we ſuppoſe, that God would hold forth Chriſt, as his Son, in one reſpect, when he is his Son in another. Never can we believe that Chriſt

Christ would declare himself the Son of God, when he appeared as a man; or would have permitted his apostles to have considered him themselves, and represented him to the world, as Son of God in his complex, if he were so only in his divine person.

5. What farther confirms the explication of our Saviour's Sonship we have given is, that the first person of the Trinity is seldom called the Father, or the second the Son before our Saviour's incarnation; and when they are so called, it is always with a view to it: but after his incarnation, they are commonly distinguished by these new relations, and by the characters expressing them.

A plurality of personal subsistences in the one divine Essence is intimated in the revelations of God to mankind from the first ages. The common name by which these divine subsistences in the Godhead were expressed, was אלהים Elohim, which signifies the *Adorable Ones*, *Gen.* i. 26. These persons subsisting in the divine Essence were all called by the name יהוה Jehovah, which signifies the eternal self-existent Being, and implies that each of these personal subsistences are as necessarily-existent, and eternal, as the divine Essence in which they all exist. Thus we are told, that "Jehovah "rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brim-"stone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven," *Gen.* xix. 24. which has commonly been understood as descriptive of the two first divine persons. Many intimations we have of these persons, and various names defining them, under the Old Testament, which it belongs not to this design particularly to enumerate. But what we observe as relating to our present argument is, that among all

all these indications of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, there is not the smallest hint given during the space of three thousand years from the creation downwards, that one of them was a Father and another a Son. When the time of the incarnation and appearance of the second of these divine persons began to approach, various prophecies were given of him, more full and particular than the former ones, to prepare the Jews and the world for giving the glorious Redeemer and his religion a proper reception. Then were the relative characters of Father and Son first heard of in the divine revelations; and those divine persons who had formerly been designed by the common names, Elohim, Jehovah, Adonai, &c. begin now to be distinguished by the appellations of Father and Son. Yet all these were given in view of that future incarnation of the divine Word. Accordingly we have showed that in the second and eighty-ninth Psalms, these characters are declared, but declared not as then actually existing, but which should take place only at Messiah's appearance. Agur, if his question "What is his name, or what is his Son's name?" *Prov.* xxx. 4. relates at all to this subject, puts it in terms that do not determine whether such relation then subsisted or should take place afterwards; and so agreeably to all the other prophetic declarations of Christ's Sonship under the Old Testament must be understood in the last of these senses. Nebuchadnezzar, instructed it is likely by some of the Jews then dwelling at Babylon, that the Son of God, who should be God in human nature, was to be the Saviour of the world, cried out on seeing the three men whom he had cast into the furnace walking untouched amidst

amidſt the devouring flames, and accompanied by a perſon more glorious, though alſo in human form, "Did not we caſt three men into "the fire? and lo, I ſee four men walking in "the midſt of the fire, and the form of the "fourth is like the Son of God," *Dan.* iii. 25. which intimates that the Babyloniſh king and his inſtructors believed the perſon muſt be the man, though more than man, who was foretold and expected as the Son of God. In like manner, St. John, when he is proving Chriſt's divinity and exiſtence before his incarnation, *John* i. 1, 2. in oppoſition to Ebion and Cerinthus, as Euſebius and Irenæus inform us; and when he repreſents him in his divine character alone, 1 *John* v. 7. never calls him the Son, though that would more clearly have repreſented him as a diſtinct perſon, but uniformly, the Logos, or God the Word. But having proceeded to ſhow that the "Word was made fleſh," ver. 14, he not only deſigns him then the begotten of the Father, but moſt commonly deſigns him ever afterwards by the ſame appellation. Thus alſo St. Paul, when he ſpeaks of Chriſt's incarnation, repreſents him not as the Son of God manifeſted in the fleſh, but as "God manifeſted in the fleſh," 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. But when he preached him as actually incarnated, he then preached him as "Chriſt the Son of God," *Acts* ix. 20. And in general we may obſerve, that from the time of our Saviour's birth through every part of the New Teſtament, the relative names of Father and Son are the common terms by which the two firſt perſons in the Godhead are uſually denominated. But what does all this naturally teach us? It muſt teach us to believe that theſe new relations between theſe divine perſons, commenced from the

the time the new names expreſſing theſe new characters and relations commenced, and the great event plainly producing them, is affirmed to be accompliſhed. Since the firſt perſon is ſeldom called the Father, or the ſecond the Son, before Chriſt's incarnation; ſince they are commonly ſo called, ever after that event; and, whether before or after, are ſo called, with a manifeſt proſpect or reference to it; and ſince the God of truth never gives names to beings but what are expreſſive of their true nature and characters, and are meant to give us juſt notions of the perſons they deſcribe, we have hence an additional proof of the truth we are eſtabliſhing, even that the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, incarnate, and only when incarnate, is the Son of God.

6. This great truth will be ſtill farther evident, when we conſider that Chriſt as Son, is commonly repreſented in Scripture as ſomehow inferior and ſubordinate to the Father; and that both in his perſonal and official character; and not only in his ſtate of humiliation upon earth, but alſo of his higheſt exaltation in heaven. Indeed, as the complex perſon of the Son includes a divine ſubſiſtence which is of the ſame divine eſſence with the Father; we find the Father and the Son ſometimes affirmed to be equal and to be one. Thus ſays Chriſt, "I and my Father are "one," *John* x. 30. And being as to their divine eſſence numerically one, he adds, "the "Father is in me and I in him," ver. 38. Upon the ſame principle he ſays to Thomas, "If ye "had known me, ye ſhould have known my Fa"ther alſo, and from henceforth ye know him, "and have ſeen him." And to Philip, "He "that hath ſeen me hath ſeen the Father. The "words that I ſpeak, I ſpeak not of myſelf, but

" the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the " works: believe me, that I am in the Father, " and the Father in me, *John* xiv. 7, 10, 11. These expreſſions though applied to the Son, who is the Word made fleſh, yet apply to him as the Word only; for in that reſpect only is he another perſonal ſubſiſtence in the ſame eſſence with the Father, and ſo the eſſence of either can be juſtly aſcribed to each other.

But though the Son, conſidered as God the Word, is in eſſence one, and in every eſſential perfection equal with the Father; yet, conſidered as Son of God, he is commonly repreſented in Scripture in a character, perſonal as well as official; that is, in ſome reſpect dependent upon and ſubordinate to the Father. In this view, Chriſt declares of himſelf at large; " Verily, " verily, I ſay unto you, the Son can do no- " thing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father " do; for whatſoever things he doth, theſe alſo " doth the Son likewiſe: for the Father loveth " the Son, and ſheweth him all things that him- " ſelf doth, and he will ſhew him greater works " than theſe, that ye may marvel; for as the Fa- " ther raiſeth up the dead and quickeneth them, " even ſo the Son quickeneth whom he will. " For the Father judgeth no man, but hath " committed all judgment unto the Son, that all " men ſhould honour the Son even as they ho- " nour the Father; he that honoureth not the " Son, honoureth not the Father which hath " ſent him. For as the Father hath life in him- " ſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have life " in himſelf; and hath given him authority to " execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son " of Man. I can of mine own ſelf do nothing; " as I hear I judge, and my judgment is juſt,

" becauſe I ſeek not mine own will, but the will " of the Father which hath ſent me," *John* v. 19—30. When the incarnate Word was about to leave this world and aſcend to heaven, he ſays, " I go unto my Father, for my Father is greater " than I;" and " as the Father gave me com- " mandment, ſo I do," *John* xiv. 28, 31. Many of theſe declarations relate to the perſon of the Son of God, as others of them plainly reſpect his offices. Several of them are too high to apply merely to any created nature; and all of them are evidently too low, to deſcribe that co-eſſential and co-equal divinity, which all Scripture aſcribes alike to the divine Word, as to the Father. But if they are too low to be applied to him as God, they muſt be applied to him either as he is man only, or as God-man. If we apply them to him as man, they plainly prove that the Son of God, as Son, poſſeſſes a human nature; and ſo fall in with our third general evidence of this truth. But as the works of raiſing the dead and judging the world, are there aſcribed to him, and the ſame worſhip is to be paid to him as to his divine Father, theſe deſcriptions muſt include alſo his divinity; and thus repreſenting him as God-man, repreſent him in a character ſomewhat inferior and ſubject to his Father. In this ſenſe we find God called by the Apoſtles, " the " God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," *Epheſ.* i. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 3. which expreſſes Chriſt's ſubordination to the Father, not indeed as to his divinity, but in his filial perſon and character as the divine Word made fleſh. And St. Paul aſſures us, that in the future world the Son himſelf ſhall be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, 1 *Cor.* xv. 28. But how and when did the Moſt High God thus humble himſelf, to

to become in ſome reſpect ſubordinate to pure divinity? Of this the Apoſtle gives us the fulleſt information; it is not by a natural inferiority of his Godhead; it is not by a real degradation of his divine perſon from its original Deity, perfection or bleſſedneſs; it is not from a ſubjection of divinity to divinity, much leſs from a reduction of divinity to an inferior nature. All theſe are incompatible with divinity, and ſo are naturally impoſſible; but it is by his aſſuming a finite nature into union with his divine perſon. It is by God's becoming God-man, and in that perſon the Son of God and the Son of Man; and ſubmitting to all thoſe humiliating offices that were neceſſary to reunite them into eternal friendſhip. "For being in the form of God, he "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, "but made himſelf of no reputation, and took "upon him the form of a ſervant; and being "found in faſhion as a man, he humbled him-"ſelf and became obedient unto death, even the "death of the croſs, wherefore God alſo hath "highly exalted him, and given him a name which "is above every name; that at the name of Jeſus "every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, "and things in earth, and things under the "earth, and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that "Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the "Father," *Phil.* ii. 6—11. Thus the ſoul of man being perſonally united with an animal body, makes him a little lower than the angels, *Pſal.* viii. 5. but when our body is ſpiritualized, we ſhall be ἰσαγγελοι equal, or like to them, *Luke* xx. 35. The ſame reaſon is aſſigned for the voluntary humiliation of the Son in Scripture, *Heb.* ii. 9. But if Chriſt as Son of God is thus repreſented in a character inferior to the Father, and

yet is affirmed as God to be equal, and one with him; what is the inference we must necessarily draw from it? It can be no other than this, that his character as Son of God, is different from, and in some respect inferior to his character as God; that this inferiority must result from his having assumed an inferior nature into union with his divine person, making him the Son of God; or that this subordination of his complex person is the subordination of a Son to his Father, though in his divine person he is equal to him; and so in either view it irrefragably proves, that Christ as God-man is the Son of God.

7. What farther proves that Christ is the Son of God in his complex person, is, that this explication of our Saviour's Sonship, and this only, agrees with all the different characters ascribed in Scripture to the Son of God, and reconciles all the Scriptures that have been urged in evidence of the other explications; and so has the universal voice of revelation joining in proof of it.

Nothing is more certain, than that the revelations of the God of truth must be consistent with themselves, and that they will always be found so, when rightly understood. These Scriptures ascribe to the Son of God different natures and characters; and in that sense, and in that only, can Christ be the Son of God, in which all these Scriptures will fairly apply to him. When we hear the sacred Scriptures prophesying of the same person, that he is to be the begotten Son of God, *Psal.* ii. 7. and to be the Son of Man, *Dan.* vii. 13. When we hear him at his birth affirmed to be at once the Son of the Highest, and the descendant of the house of David, *Luke* i. 31. When we hear him through his whole ministry calling himself indiscriminately the Son

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of God, and the Son of Man; and at his crucifixion bidding his mother Mary behold her Son, *John* xix. 21. and commending his Spirit into the hands of God as his Father, *Luke* xxiii. 46. When we find him in one place affirming, "I and my Father are one," *John* x. 30. in another, "My Father is greater than I," *John* xiv. 28. When on one occasion it is declared of him, that he knoweth all things, *John* xxi. 17. on another, that he knoweth not the time of the general judgment, *Mark* xiii. 32. At one time that he can do all things, *Phil.* iii. 21. at another, that of himself he can do nothing; but what he seeth the Father do, that doth the Son likewise, *John* v. 30. When we see him in one place called God over all and blessed for ever, *Rom.* ix. 5. *in* another, affirmed to be subject to his Father, 1 *Cor.* xv. 28. When, as the ground of all these different attributions, all Scripture declares him to be true God, 1 *John* v. 20. and so possessing all the perfections of God; and true man, having the full nature, properties, and actions of man ascribed to him, as we have showed at large in the first chapter. Nay, when we are expressly informed that this Son of God is Immanuel, *Matt.* i. 23. the Word made flesh. *John* i. 14. God manifested in the flesh, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. and so uniting both these natures in one person, has all the properties of each uniformly ascribed to him. When, I say, we consider all these different natures and characters, divine and human, that through the whole book of God are ascribed to his Son; what are we, as sensible men, what are we, as judicious Christians, from all this to conclude? Are we to believe our Blessed Saviour to be the Son of God, as he is God only, when upon equal evidence we are

aſſured he is alſo man? Or ought we to hold him to be Son of God, as he is man only, when we have the ſame undeniable evidence that he is alſo God? And are we to preſs theſe partial repreſentations the Scriptures give of his complex perſon, in different views, to ſupport either of theſe oppoſite opinions, as both parties have done, and make the Word of truth contradictory to itſelf? By no means; this is to put aſunder what God in all his revelations hath clearly conjoined. The truth lies here not in the oppoſition, but in the conjunction of theſe characters. This is done by the explication we have given of our Saviour's Sonſhip; and can be done upon no other ſuppoſeable and ſcriptural ſcheme.

All Scripture affirms the Son, as God, to have the ſame ſupreme divinity as the other perſons in the Godhead. The Athanaſians, Schoolmen and Semiarians give him however only a generated and derived divinity, and the Arians and Socinians no divinity at all. But the explication of his Sonſhip we have here given, preſerves and confirms his ſupreme Deity, yet in perfect conſiſtence with his proper Sonſhip. All Scripture that exhibits Chriſt as Son of God, exhibits him in that character as God and man, and aſcribes to him natures, characters and offices, correſpondent to this complex perſon. Theſe are totally irreconcileable, if we hold him to be Son of God as he is God only, or as he is man only; but are perfectly conſiſtent, if he is the Son of God as he is both. By this explication as theſe different theories, ſo far as they are juſt, are united; ſo all the paſſages of Scripture, that give any proof of them, are fairly reconciled; and whereas when ſeparated, they yielded but a faint evidence of either ſide of the ſubject, and in doing

doing ſo, ſtood in direct oppoſition to each other; they now give a full and conſiſtent proof of the general connected ſubject they were meant to deſcribe, which to every Chriſtian muſt be demonſtration, that the connected view we have given of it, is the ſcriptural and juſt one.

Such is the manifold and convincing evidence we have that Chriſt Jeſus in both his natures is the Son of God, and that he became ſo, when theſe natures were united in the generation and birth of the glorious Immanuel.

This generation and Sonſhip of our Bleſſed Saviour is the fundamental article of revealed religion, and ſo makes a capital part of every revelation of God to mankind. And as no truth is of greater importance, ſo none is ſupported by clearer or more abundant evidence. We have thought fit to exhibit this evidence in its proper variety and fulneſs, both becauſe this was a chief part of our deſign, and the foundation of the ſubſequent parts of it; and eſpecially becauſe this ſcriptural and compleat view of our Saviour's Sonſhip hath long been loſt amidſt thoſe partial and imperfect, and often moſt unnatural as well as unſcriptural views of it, which have been exhibited to the world and generally received by it. This, with ſuperficial enquirers, may ſeem a new explication of our Saviour's Sonſhip, and a great innovation in the Chriſtian ſyſtem. But in reality, it is only the ancient, and the true one revived, and eſtabliſhed by a more regular and compleat evidence than hath been hitherto exhibited. And though it has not the recommendation of the general belief, it has what to every reaſonable man and judicious Chriſtian will be a much higher recommendation; it has the fulleſt and cleareſt teſtimony of Scripture. It

has alſo the general belief of the Church in its primitive and pureſt ſtate. The Jewiſh teachers, we have ſeen, predicted the Son of God in this complex perſonality. The ancient Jewiſh church believed and expected him in this character. They could not indeed have ſuch a diſtinct knowledge that the ſecond perſon in the Godhead was to be perſonally united with human nature; but they believed that the Son of God was to be a man, having the divinity dwelling in him in an extraordinary manner. Thus when he affirmed that God was his Father, the Jews ſought to kill him, as plainly making himſelf equal with God, *John* v. 18. And when he acknowledged himſelf the Son of God before the council, the high-prieſt and the whole council declared him guilty of blaſphemy, by which they ſhewed, that according to the faith of the Jews, the Meſſiah, or Son of God, was to be a man with ſupreme divinity dwelling within him. Of the many Rabbi's Origen conſulted on this head, he aſſures us, not one of them would admit the Logos alone to be the Son of God. *Orig. contr. Celſum.* Lib. II. And accordingly Rabbi Raſchi, and other modern Jews, deſcribe Meſſiah as having the divine Word, בקרבו in the middle of him.

The primitive Chriſtian and apoſtolic church conſidered the Son of God in the ſame light; as in this light Chriſt and his apoſtles did uniformly repreſent it. The ſucceeding ages gradually departed from this juſt notion of our Saviour's Sonſhip; and by that departure have given occaſion to more general and laſting errors, as to this article, than as to any other in the whole ſyſtem of Chriſtianity. More diſtinguiſhed for piety and eloquence, than

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a critical ſtudy of the Scriptures; ignorant of or inattentive to the juſt theory of generation; and many of them converts from heatheniſm, in which the generation of their gods made a great part of their theology; the fathers injudiciouſly confounded the Son of God with the divine Word; and applied that generation which gives the Logos a perſonal co-exiſtence only with human nature, to give exiſtence to the eternal Logos himſelf. Hence they proceeded to repreſent the firſt perſon as αρχη, αιτια, πατηρ, *principium*, *auctor*, the principle, the efficient cauſe; the Father or producer of the ſecond; held the ſecond to be a Son derived from his Father, and dependent upon him for exiſtence, and applied all thoſe inferior characters to the Son, as God, which we have ſeen the Scriptures affirm of him only as he is God-man. This unhappily paved the way, firſt for Arianiſm, and then for Mahometiſm in the firſt ages; and this and the ſcholaſtic theory of the Trinity founded upon it, gave birth not only to modern Arianiſm, but to Socinianiſm itſelf: from the orthodox acknowledging a generated, Arius and his followers proceeded to give him only a created Deity, though created from eternity; and the Socinians make him only a creature of time.

Yet neither were the private writings of the fathers, nor the public decrees of their councils, unanimous upon this ſubject. Several of the fathers gave Chriſt an exiſtence, as the divine eternal Logos, previous to his more diſtinct generation as the Son. The Nicene Creed reſted his exiſtence as Son, on his eternal generation by the Father; yet the ſymbol aſcribed to Athanaſius affirms him, as God, to be in all reſpects co-equal and co-eternal with

the Father; and that his Sonſhip commenced ſome-how before the world. And the moſt general Creed, commonly called Apoſtolic, taken in its plain connection and meaning, repreſents this article in the preciſe light in which we have here placed it, and in which Chriſt and his apoſtles firſt declared it. For having affirmed Jeſus Chriſt to be God's only Son, it repreſents this Son, as conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, born of the Virgin Mary, and ſubmitting to all thoſe ſufferings, and exalted to thoſe rewards, which all along characterize this Son of God, as uniting humanity with divinity in the conſtitution of his perſon. But it is not the opinions of fallible men, but the revelations of the God of truth that direct and eſtabliſh the faith of a Chriſtian, upon this important ſubject. If it have this evidence, it needs no other: if it wants this, none elſe can ſupport it. By not attending to this unerring rule, every error on this and the other articles of religion have in every period crept into the church; and it is only by recurring to it, that theſe errors can be corrected, and genuine Chriſtianity reſtored. By this certain and effectual method, were many erroneous principles in doctrine and practice detected, and diſcarded at the late happy Reformation; and by the ſame means only, can this fundamental article of our faith be reſcued from the imperfect or miſtaken notions, which both the later Greek and Latin churches have held of it, and recovered to that juſt and natural ſenſe in which the Scriptures have placed it. The books of Philo, and the Targumiſts; the writings of the Chriſtian fathers, and the decrees of the councils, may ſhow what were their ſentiments upon this ſubject, and in what light they explained

plained the Scriptures relating to it. But these are oftentimes different from Scripture, different from each other, and sometimes from themselves; so that the orthodox and the heretics have both claimed them as on their side. The inspired writings alone are the foundation and standard of revealed theology, as much superior in authority to every human composure, as the infallible God is to fallible men, and to which every opinion of mankind must ever be subject. By this unerring rule, and not by the application of a part, but of the whole of it, we have endeavoured to investigate and ascertain the proper ground of our Saviour's Sonship. The explication we have given of this article, as it has the countenance and support of every part of revelation, so it not a little recommends itself to our regards from its perfect consistency with our Saviour's supreme divinity, and its natural tendency to establish that great truth, upon its proper foundation, and to banish those erroneous and dangerous opinions, as to our Saviour's person, with which the Christian church hath been long pestered, and which have originated chiefly from a misunderstanding of his Sonship. The Athanasians, the schoolmen, and their followers, holding him God, and the Son of God, by eternal generation, degraded their Saviour from a necessarily-existent to a generated and dependent Deity. The Arians, holding him Son of God, only as he is a glorious and god-like spirit, created by God before all worlds; and the Socinians, who hold him but a man, raised to god-like power and glory, have given up his real divinity altogether, and every just ground of his being the begotten Son of God; and all of them have most certainly erred in limiting his Sonship t one of his natures, when all Scripture and every

rational idea of generation, join in assuring us it includes both. This explication of it restores this fundamental article of our faith, to that just light, in which God, and the Son of God, the prophets and apostles revealed it, and the church received it: and it is attended with none of the absurdities that attend these unnatural and imperfect expositions of it which latter ages have fallen into, while it has every advantage with which any of them are attended. This holds him to be the Son of God, as he is God, yet without a generated or created, but necessarily-existent divinity, as all true divinity must necessarily be, and the Son of God too as he is man, yet as he is neither only, but both united by a proper generation, and co-existing in one complex person. This neither infringes his supreme Deity, by making him a generated God on the one hand, nor weakens the argument from his being the begotten Son of God, that he must be truly God, but greatly strengthens both, while his divinity is not derived or dependent, but necessarily-existent and eternal, as the divine essence in general, and the other personal subsistences identified with that essence, however distinguishable from each other, must necessarily be. Nor does it exalt a mere creature to the characters and honours of its divine Creator; but unites the divine co-essential, necessarily-existent and eternal Word, by the power of God, with a human nature, constituting the complex person of Immanuel; who is both God and man in one person; and who in this compound person, begotten or constituted by his divine Father, and born of his Virgin Mother, is in all propriety of language, and with the full declaration of Scripture, the Son of both. And without vanity,

nity, I will ſay, had this natural and ſcriptural view of our Saviour's Sonſhip been properly adhered to, Arianiſm and Socinianiſm would either never have been broached, or, like the other hereſies, would ſoon have been effectually confuted and baniſhed, as the evidence of Scripture would be ſo full and ſtrong in ſupport of his ſupreme Deity; and yet his ſupreme divinity be ſo conſiſtent with his Sonſhip, that thoſe unnatural, antiſcriptural doctrines would by every judicious Chriſtian be diſcarded; or if any adhered to them, they muſt plainly renounce every regard to divine revelation, by every part of which they are moſt clearly contradicted.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Generation of the Son of God, and the Conſtitution of his Perſon.

HAVING inveſtigated the natures which exiſt in our Saviour's perſon, ſhewed that this perſon is the Son, the begotten Son of God, and proved that he poſſeſſes this character as he is God-man; we go on to explain more particularly his wonderful generation, and the conſtitution of his complex perſon thereby produced. This will illuſtrate and confirm the account of his Sonſhip we have given, and delineate the perſon of that glorious Immanuel, on whoſe perſon and mediation are built all our hopes of everlaſting happineſs. It will alſo ſhow us how far, and only how far the analogy holds between the generation of the Son of God and of the ſons of men, and guard us againſt puſhing the reſemblance beyond its juſt and proper bounds. A full diſcuſſion of this ſublime ſubject is indeed impracticable: for what mortal can fully inveſtigate and declare the generation and conſtitution of this Son of God! We know little of our own nature, we know much leſs of the divine, and how can we know perfectly that glorious perſonage that contains both?

But though an adequate comprehenſion of this ſubject is impoſſible, ſuch a knowledge of it is attainable as is neceſſary for our ſalvation: and for this our gracious God hath ſufficiently provided by the revelations he hath given us. In

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compliance therefore with the design of these revelations, we shall endeavour shortly to delineate this subject, by shewing, 1. What Christ was before his generation, and what he must farther be, to become the begotten Son of God. 2. Give an account from Scripture of his actual generation according to these principles, and 3. Describe the constitution of his person as God-man, the Son of God.

I. The generation of the sons of men, to which that of the Son of God is represented as analogous, consists in the connexion of the pre-existent human principle of the Father with the additional substance, necessary to the completion of its person, derived from the mother. Similar must be the generation of the Son of God. From his two different natures united in one person, he is at once the Son of God and the Son of man; and therefore his generation must consist in the unition or constitution of these natures into one person. The constituents of this complex person are the divine Logos and a perfect human nature; both these we have proved to exist in our Saviour's person, and therefore these must have been personally united in the generation of it. The first and chief constituent of our Saviour's complex person is his divine subsistence, called in Scripture the Logos or Word of God. Λογος in the Greek language signifies both reason and speech: applied by the inspired writers to the divine person of Christ, it signifies something analogous, though greatly superior to these. In the first sense, it signifies that this divine person is an intelligent personal subsistence in the divine essence, as essential to the Deity, as reason is to a rational nature, and as inseparable from the other persons in that essence, as reason is from mind or

spirit.

ſpirit. In the ſecond ſenſe it implies, that by him were the divine wiſdom and power in a ſpecial manner exerted in the creation of the world, and the will of God revealed in after ages to his reaſonable creatures. The firſt relates more to his perſonal, the ſecond more to his œconomical character. Yet none of them are meant to repreſent him, as a mere quality or virtue of the Deity; but as a divine perſonal ſubſiſtence poſſeſſing every perfection intellectual and active, and exerting them in conjunction with the other perſons in the Godhead. By this divine Word the Jewiſh revelations affirm all things to have been created, *Pſa.* xxxiii. 60. And from theſe the Jewiſh and Chaldean Paraphraſts held the מימרא, Memra, and the Greek writers the Λογος, Logos, to be that divine agent by whom all things were made. By this term, ſo long and ſo generally underſtood, St. John denominates this divine perſon; and confirms the general belief, by affirming that "in the begin-"ning was the Word, and the Word was with "God, and the Word was God; all things were "made by him, and without him was not "any thing made, that was made," *John* i. 13. And farther to ſhow us that he is neither the general Deity under a different name, nor a mere power of that Deity, but a perſonal ſubſiſtence in the tri-une Godhead, he aſſures us, that "there "are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, "the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three "are one," 1 *John* v. 7. This ſecond perſon of the Trinity is the original principle and grand conſtituent of the Son of God. Like the original principle in human generation, this divine ſubſiſtence had co-exiſted with the firſt perſon, by the ſame neceſſity of nature as the firſt, diſtinguiſhed from him as another perſonal ſubſiſtence, yet poſ-

ſeſſing with him the ſame divine eſſence. Superior to the originating principle in human generation, this divine principle was not only of the ſame ſpecific, but of the ſame numerical eſſence with the Father; and was equally a complete perſonal ſubſiſtence in that eſſence, and poſſeſſed equally every perfection the other perſons do poſſeſs. This was the original character of him who afterwards appeared as the Son of God, and this is the juſt foundation of all thoſe divine names, perfections, and honours, that we have ſhowed the Scripture uniformly aſcribes to him, equally and in common with the other perſons in the Godhead. In this divine eſſence he had co-exiſted with the Father, and the conſubſtantial ſpirit from eternal ages, poſſeſſed of the ſame divine perfections and glory, and happineſs. He had been co-partner with him in all the counſels of his wiſdom, with regard to the world, and man, before the foundation of the world, *Epheſ.* i. 3, 4. 1 *Peter* i. 20. He had been a co-eſſential and conjunct agent with him in the creation of all things, for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things conſiſt, *Col.* i. 16, 17. Poſſeſſed of the divine nature and all its perfections, he needed no other nature, nor any additional perfection to make his character more perfect. Having all the fulneſs of God, he needed nothing more to complete his happineſs; and united with his Father in the ſame divine eſſence, he could have no relation to him nearer or more endearing. But though he could have no cloſer connexion with God, he might have a cloſer connexion with his creatures;

tures; and though by assuming an additional nature, his divine nature could neither be made more perfect nor more happy; yet superior honour and happiness might be derived to the creatures he hath made. This the divine wisdom and goodness before all worlds had ordained. With the co-essential Logos, were all things decreed, and by him, as the Almighty Word, were the beings decreed to be created. As by him in a special manner all things were decreed and created, so he was to be the grand medium, through whom the subsequent blessings of the divine goodness and grace were to be conveyed to his creation. He had been essentially connected with God, and was God from all eternity; but the divine counsels had determined that this consubstantial Word should by a personal union with a created nature, effected by a divine generation, become God-man and the Son of God, the bond of union between pure Deity and his created intelligent children, and the glorious mediator through whom the divine government should be administered and the blessings of his goodness be dispensed to his creatures. This must be done by the assumption of another nature into personal union with the divine Logos, and the assumption of it in such a way as corresponds to the general law of generation among human beings, and would constitute the complex person produced, the begotten and proper Son of God. The nature to be assumed was the human, that abridgment of creation, and the species of being for whose benefit the generation of Messiah's person was in a special manner decreed and effected. This human nature consists of a finite created spirit, called the soul, and a material human frame, called the body; the one connecting us with the spiritual

rital ſyſtem, the other with the material; yet the two compounded making us complex beings diſtinguiſhed from both. Both of theſe muſt the Son of God our Saviour aſſume, for his brethren he came to redeem poſſeſſed both, and both he muſt aſſume in a way analogous to that by which his human brethren received them. His ſoul, like all finite ſpirits, muſt be created from nothing by the power of God. Being to connect perſonally with the divine word, on the one hand, and with the human body on the other, it muſt be created for union with both. The laſt conſtitutes it a ſoul truly human; but the firſt gives it a diſtinction and ſuperiority to the higheſt created intelligences. A ſoul formed for perſonal union with the all-perfect Word, muſt alſo be the moſt perfect its finite nature and its ſtate can admit. None but a moſt exalted ſpirit could receive the extraordinary communications, and bear the immediate impreſſions of indwelling Deity, nor ſuſtain that overpowering blaze of divine glory, at a diſtance from which angels muſt cover their faces with their wings; but into the ſplendors of which the Son of God was to be for ever advanced.

With this glorious human ſoul, the Son of God muſt alſo have a human body, to give him a ſpecial relation to man, the ſpecies of being he was to redeem and exalt, and whoſe compleat nature he was eſpecially to aſſume; "for in all "things it behoved him to be made like unto his "brethren," *Heb.* ii. 17. This human body alſo muſt be formed by the divine power; for he could have no human father who was to be the begotten Son of God. It was, however, to be formed by God, of the ſubſtance of a woman, that he who was to be our Redeemer might be our near kinſman. And finally, in the formation.

formation of his body and creation of his soul, the divine Word must be united to them by the Father in one person, and he be born of his mother so as to make the complex person produced, the Son at once of God and of man. Such was Christ in his original character as God, and thus must he become God-man, by a divine generation uniting him with human nature, that he might be the Son of God. We proceed, therefore,

II. To shew, that exactly in this manner was our Saviour's complex person constituted, and his generation as the Son of God effected; "for "the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst "us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as "the only begotten of the Father," *John* i. 14. We have formerly proved, that in the person of Christ, there are a divine subsistence, a created soul, and a human body, with all the properties belonging to each. These we are now to shew were at his incarnation united in one complex person, and united in such a manner as answers to every proper idea of generation, and justly constitutes that person, the begotten Son of God. The divine wisdom had ordained, and his revelations foretold, that he who was to be the Son of God should be born of a virgin, *Isaiah* vii. 14. From his regards to faithful Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God had promised that his Son, our Saviour, should be of their seed, *Gen.* xii. 3. The tribe of Judah and family of David, that were raised to royal dominion over all the tribes and families of Israel, were to give birth to that personage who was to be the Head and Lord of the church and world. And of one of the last descendants of that royal family was Messiah to be born, in whom the temporal and

and typical kingdom of David was ordained to determine, and the noble and ſpiritual empire of Chriſt was to appear that ſhould extend over the whole creation of being, and endure for ever. The perſon whom God had decreed to this peculiar honour, and in whom all theſe characters united, was the Virgin Mary, diſtinguiſhed by the royalty and worth of her anceſtors, more diſtinguiſhed by her own piety and virtue, the nobleſt of all diſtinctions, and now to be diſtinguiſhed above all her ſex, by giving birth to the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Of the ſubſtance of this bleſſed perſon was our Saviour's human body to be formed; in her, by the unition of God's co-eſſential Word with a proper human nature, was that complex perſon to be generated, and by her was he to be conceived and born, who was to be the Son of God.

This was to be the moſt divine and the moſt wonderful of all God's works. The creator and creature; the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, a created ſoul and human body, are now to be conjoined in one perſon. Like all the other works of God, this is to be effected by the conjunct agency of the co-eſſential and undivided Trinity: yet, agreeably to that general œconomy which we find takes place among the ſacred Three, in their immenſe deſign of external operation, it is to originate from, and to be effected chiefly by the firſt perſon, who from his peculiar and paternal agency in this incarnation of the divine Word, was to have the character of the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and this complex perſon produced to have the correlative character of God's begotten Son. Thus the Scriptures aſſure us, that God prepared the human body of his Son, *Heb.* x. 5. They alſo inform us, that he

prepared

prepared this body by the immediate agency of his Holy Spirit; for ſays the Angel to the Bleſſed Virgin, "The Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee," *Luke* i. 35. and he declares to Joſeph, that "that which was conceived in her was of the "Holy Ghoſt," *Matth.* i. 20. This does not imply that the ſubſtance of our Saviour's body was derived from the eſſence of the Holy Spirit, for the one was ſpiritual, the other was to be material; the one was divine, the other muſt be human. Nor does it ſignify that of any other ſubſtance was this body firſt formed, and then infuſed by the Divine Spirit into the Bleſſed Virgin; for the body of our Saviour is expreſsly affirmed to have been made of a woman, *Gal.* iv. 4. But the natural meaning of it is, that God formed the body of his Son of the ſubſtance and in the womb of the Virgin, by the Holy Ghoſt.

This omnipotent agent takes of the ſubſtance of the Bleſſed Virgin what was neceſſary and proper for the rudiments of our Saviour's body, and in ſupplement to the want of an animalcular principle, organizes it into the embryo of a human body, fit for the union and inhabitation of his human ſoul, and alſo of the divine Logos that was perſonally connected with it. While God by his Spirit thus forms the body of Chriſt of the ſubſtance of the Virgin, he alſo creates that holy ſoul which we have ſhowed the Son of God does alſo poſſeſs, and which, as it holds a ſort of intermediate nature and rank between the divine Logos and his human body, we may well ſuppoſe makes the proper medium and connecting bond between the one and the other. This glorious Spirit was created by the ſpecial power of God the Father, one of whoſe characters is, that he is the *Father of Spirits*, *Heb.* xii. 9.

xii. 9. and who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And it was created of the noblest nature and powers suited to its exalted character, and qualified for union and intercourse both with the divine Word and with its human body, with both of which it was personally connected. In the creation of this human nature and the personal union of it with the divine, in the Virgin's womb, consisted the generation of the Son of God. Yet this union was not between the divine general essence and human nature, for in this case the whole Trinity would have been incarnate, but between this human nature and the second person, the Logos, on which account he alone was made flesh, *John* i. 14. Nor was it between the divine Logos and the general substance of the Blessed Virgin, for in that case she would have been deified. But it was between the divine Logos and the human embryo formed of her by the Holy Spirit and animated with its human soul, by which means, though the Blessed Mother had the high honour of conceiving the Son of God, her Son alone had the infinitely higher honour of uniting Deity and humanity in his glorious person. This union, strictly speaking, was not performed so much by a communication of the divine to the human, as by the accession of the human to the divine nature. Thus as in human generation, the paternal principle is the original and originating, and the maternal substance the accessory part, so much more was this the case in this divine generation. The divine nature, infinite and immoveable, was not infused into the human, but the human nature was assumed into personal co-existence with the divine. The Logos was not separated from the divine essence, or from the other persons, but was made

made flesh by the assumption of human nature into union with himself. Nor were this human soul and body first created and thereafter united to his divine person. Their creation and union were perfectly simultaneous. They were united with his Deity in their creation, and created in their unition to it; so that from the first moment of their existence, they existed in personal union with the divine Word. And as in human generation the child is procreated by the union of the paternal principle with the accessory substance derived from the mother, and this is effected by the concurrence of the father, of the living principle and of the mother, so by all these ways was this supernatural generation of Messiah effected. The divine Logos, co-equal and co-essential with his Father, was united with human nature in the Virgin's womb. The union, as has been said, was effected primarily by the agency of the Father, who by his almighty power created Christ's human soul, and by his divine Spirit organized his human body, and formed both for union with his divine Word. It was effected also by the co-operation of the divine Logos himself, whose will and power were the same with his Father, and were exerted to the same effect; for "as the children are partakers "of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise "took part of the same," *Heb.* ii. 14. And he "who was in the form of God, did now take "upon himself the fashion of man," *Phil.* ii. 6—8. The Virgin Mother was passive in this supernatural generation; yet she furnished the substance of which our Saviour's body was at first organized, and after his conception, she afforded nourishment to his body during her course of pregnancy, and at last brought him forth

forth into the world. Thus was she the Mother, not of God, as many both of the ancients and moderns have inaccurately called her; nor the mother of a mere man, as others erroneously held, but the Mother of the Son of God. Christ, as God, can neither have father or mother; but in his complex character, as God-man, he had both. God was his Father, the Virgin Mary his Mother, and he the Son of God and the Son of Man; "The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst "us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of "the only begotten of the Father." *John* i. 14. "For when the fulness of time was come, God "sent forth his Son made of a woman," *Gal.* iv. 4. Such was the generation of the Son of God, and such the natural and scriptural ground of it, analogous, in every necessary instance, to human generation, though greatly superior to it; and what constitutes Christ, as all Scripture defines him, God's only begotten and proper Son.

III. Let us consider more particularly the constitution of his complex person, that our knowledge of him may be farther enlarged.

This Son of God and Man unites the natures of both, and unites these natures in one complex person. Before his incarnation he was God, or the second personal subsistence in the divine essence, now he becomes God-man, the divine Word made flesh. This made no real change in his divinity, for divinity can never change. The real change was made wholly on his humanity, even from non-existence into existence, and an existence of all others the most honourable, a co-existence in one person with its divine creator. The change on his divinity was not real but relative. From existing only in one essence with the other persons in the godhead, and being a purely

divine perſon, he, by aſſuming our nature into perſonal union with his divinity, of a ſimple, became a complex perſon, of God, he became God-man. In this perſon he poſſeſſes a truly divine nature as the Word; and a true and compleat human nature in a reaſonable ſoul and human body, which he aſſumed into union with his pre-exiſtent divinity. Theſe two natures are not united by mere appoſition, as two material bodies are joined in contiguity; nor by mere harmony of thought or affection, as congenial minds are ſaid to be one; nor by mere inhabitation of the divine nature, by its gracious influence, in the human nature, as God dwells in and operates on the minds of good men. It is an union cloſer and more intimate; and of which neither nor all of theſe are the foundation; but are rather the effects. It is an union truly perſonal, an union by which the human exiſts in one complex perſon with the divine nature. This, as we formerly ſhewed Chap I. is evident from the aſcription of both natures, by the inſpired writers, to the ſame perſon of Chriſt; the aſcription of perfections and actions divine and human to the ſame perſon; and even the reciprocation of theſe characters; thoſe things being aſcribed to the divine, which belong ſtrictly to the human, and thoſe things being aſcribed to the human, which properly belong to the divine nature, but through the conjunction of theſe natures in one perſon are applicable to the general Perſon, and applied in common language to that perſon as characterized from either of its natures. And this the general theory of human generation, which relates to complex perſons, implies, and the accounts we have given from ſcripture of our Lords generation clearly demonſtrates.

What

What is the mode of this union, or what the ties by which it is eſtabliſhed and preſerved, God has not revealed, as it was neither neceſſary, nor perhaps poſſible for man to know it. We know not the ties by which ſpirit and body are connected in our own perſons, and how can we know the ties that unite in one perſon the divine and human natures of the Son of God? We know the natures and qualities of ſpirit and of body ſo far, as to know they are eſſentially different. We know they cannot be confounded without a mutual deſtruction of their very eſences, but that they are capable of union and co-exiſtence in one complex perſon, we have the higheſt evidence, for we feel it every moment in ourſelves, and perceive it in the whole world of mankind around us. In like manner we know ſo much of the divine and human natures of Chriſt, as to be aſſured they are eſſentially and infinitely different, and that they can never be converted the one into the other. But that they are incapable of union, we have no reaſon to believe, but much the contrary. The Deity, in a more general way, contains the whole creation in his eſſence; and though he is not ſtrictly the *anima mundi*, or connected with it in one great whole as our ſouls are with our bodies, as many of the heathens of old, and Spinoza and his followers of late have abſurdly imagined; yet ſomewhat like our ſouls in our bodies, he conſtantly ſuſtains and actuates the whole, for in him we live, move, and have our being. He dwells more intimately by his gracious preſence, his ſpirit and influence in the minds of good beings, animating them with all the principles, and filling them with the joys of the divine life. What then ſhould hinder the Almighty, if he pleaſes, to create an intelligent

nature fit for more intimate union with himſelf, and to create it in that union, an union ſo cloſe and intimate as may be juſtly called perſonal? Does he in fact connect angelic and animal natures without mixture or confuſion in every human perſon; and can he not create a human nature, and aſſume it into union with himſelf, as cloſe as what he hath eſtabliſhed between inferior, yet eſſentially different natures? In truth there is nothing more inconceivable in the union of Deity and humanity in the perſon of the Son of God, which he hath expreſly declared to us, than in the union of mind and body; an intelligent, immaterial, immortal mind, with unconſcious, material, and mortal body, of which however the whole world of human beings are evidences. Nay as the Deity neceſſarily pervades all nature, and co-exiſts in a general way with every mind he hath made, and as there muſt be a greater affinity betwixt the great Eternal Spirit and a human ſpirit created by him, created for and created in perſonal exiſtence with him, though infinitely diſtinct from him, than between a human ſoul and body that have no point of agreement that we know of, ſo the union of thoſe natures in Chriſt's complex perſon, ſeems more eaſily conceivable, than that of thoſe ſo oppoſite natures of which our own perſons are evidently compoſed. Our nature, which he aſſumed to his divine perſon, is in itſelf a complex one; for our benefit chiefly did he aſſume it, and as we are of all beings the moſt concerned to believe it; ſo of all beings have we higheſt reaſon to believe it, as we have in the conſtitution of our own natures, the nobleſt reſemblance of our Redeemer's perſon creation affords. This manifeſtation of God in human fleſh is, as St. Paul ranks it, the firſt

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and the greateſt myſtery of godlineſs, which angels deſire to look into, but the moſt piercing intelligence cannot fully inveſtigate. Yet the myſtery lies not ſo much in the difficulty of uniting natures eſſentially different, myſterious as that is, as in the wiſdom and moral fitneſs of ſuch an extraordinary conſtitution in the œconomy of Divine Providence, the diſcuſſion of which belongs not ſo much to the formation of Meſſiah's perſon, as to the character he was to bear and the offices he was to perform.

The perfect knowledge of this ſubject exceeds the comprehenſion of our finite minds, yet we can eaſily perceive there is nothing in it impoſſible, nothing repugnant to the nature of things. And though we cannot penetrate the complete nature of this union, the tyes by which it exiſts, and the laws of operation between the divine and human natures, yet by the light of revelation, and the general knowledge of this great ſubject it hath afforded us, we can clearly inveſtigate what is neceſſary for us to know of it in this preſent ſtate. As the council of Chalcedon convened to take cognizance of the *Neſtorian* hereſy declared, this union of theſe natures in our Saviour's perſon is conſtituted ασυγχυτως, without any confuſion or commixture of theſe natures; αδρεπτως, without tranſmutation or change of theſe natures into each other; αδιαιρετως, without diviſion of theſe natures into two diſtinct perſons, and αχωριστως, without all future ſeparation of theſe natures, thus united in the perſon of the Son of God. Theſe were the terms by which the ancient church guarded againſt the various errors which then ſprung up as to the perſon of our Bleſſed Saviour. Being framed againſt theſe errors, they are all negative: yet they clearly enough indi-

cate the positive truth revelation teaches, and the Christian church is to believe with regard to this article of our holy faith. The divine and human natures are united in the person of Christ, without any confusion or mixture of the one with the other; for natures so essentially different, however they may be connected, can never be blended or confounded, but must each remain what it essentially is, and retain all the qualities that essentially belong to it. They are united without conversion or transmutation into each other; for it is impossible that the infinite and divine nature can be changed into a finite and human, and as impossible that a finite and human can be transubstantiated into an infinite and divine nature. But though the natures are two, the person is but one; for whenever two natures unite in one personal subsistence, they become one complex person. Had the human nature of Christ been created, and existed for some time before its assumption into personal union with the divine Word, each nature would have so long possessed its distinct personality; but upon their union into one personal substance, their individual personalities unite also into one complex person. Much more is this the case in the incarnation of Christ: his human nature never existed by itself, but had the commencement of its existence from its personal co-existence with the divine Word, and of a simple person, as God, made him a complex person, as God-man. And though these natures remain distinct from each other, or without all confusion or conversion, yet in this complex person are they united together by ties so strong as can never be broken; and in union so permanent as shall never be dissolved. Like the souls and bodies of the sons of men, which are

united

united in our conſtitution without mixture or change of their natures, and though two diſtinct natures, yet, by their perſonal union and co-exiſtence, make but one perſon; and like theſe ſouls and bodies that in our future immortal ſtate ſhall be united, never to be ſeparated: ſo the divine Logos and a human nature are connected in union that is truly perſonal; and though theſe natures are eſſentially diſtinct, their perſonal union ſhall never be diſſolved. The complex perſon is God, and he is man: he has the complete divine nature in one of its perſonal diſtinctions, and a complete human nature, with all their eſſential properties, co-exiſting in his perſon; yet the divine nature is not confounded with the human, nor the human nature with the divine. The divinity is not degraded to humanity, nor the humanity exalted to divinity. As the natures are not tranſubſtantiated, as little are their properties transferred. The infinite divinity partakes not the finite qualities of the humanity, nor the finite humanity the infinite perfections of the divinity. The divine nature becomes not finite in eſſence, knowledge or power, nor the human omnipreſent, omniſcient or almighty, but every nature retains the properties that eſſentially belong to it. Yet theſe natures, as they co-exiſt in one perſon, co-exiſt and act in the moſt perfect harmony and conſiſtence with each other. Like the ſoul in our complex nature, ſo the divine Logos in the complex perſon of Chriſt is the great principle of life, direction, and agency; and the human nature, like our animal frame, is juſtly under its direction and influence. The divinity exerts itſelf in communicating to the humanity every endowment intellectual and moral, and all competent happineſs, adapted to the different ſtates

and characters in which he was to act; and the humanity ever exists and acts in just consonance and subjection to its indwelling Deity. The general person, containing a divine and human nature, may be denominated from the one nature, from the other, or from both; and may have all the attributes of each ascribed to him. And as these natures were united in a way similar to generation, and this complex person was generated by God, and conceived in and born of the Blessed Virgin, he may be, and in Scripture is indiscriminately designed the Son of God, or the Son of Man.

CHAP. V.

Of the perſonal Excellence and Dignity of the Son of God.

AFTER the generation of the Son of God, it follows that we treat next of the excellence and dignity of the perſon generated. This is not only an eſſential part of this great ſubject, but a part too of capital importance. From the complex perſon of the Son of God, and the excellence of that perſon, flows his fitneſs for every office he was intended to diſcharge as the Son of God and Saviour of Men. Ignorance of this perſonal excellence is the primary ſource of that diſregard to him that ſo impiouſly prevails in the world; whereas, juſt conceptions of his dignity and glory would at once ſupport our hopes of every bleſſing we expect from him, and cheriſh every dutiful regard we juſtly owe to him. The natures divine and human which compoſe his his perſon, and ſeveral of the characters belonging to theſe natures, we have already mentioned in the firſt chapter. But theſe natures were then rather proved than explained; rather eſtabliſhed to pave the way for aſcertaining in what reſpect our Saviour is the Son of God, than to exhibit his dignity in that perſon and character. But now that we have endeavoured by every evidence of revelation to decide this matter, and have explained his generation agreeably to that deciſion, let us, for our farther knowledge of him, proceed to inveſtigate and diſplay, in the moſt obvious points, his perſonal excellence, dignity and glory.

I. This illuſtrious perſon is the Son of God, his only begotten Son, and infinitely ſuperior to all thoſe beings, who in an inferior ſenſe are called the Sons of God. This point of our Saviour's dignity reſults immediately from that divine generation, of his complex perſon, which we laſt explained. From all eternity he had been the divine Logos, co-exiſting with the other divine ſubſiſtences in the ſame divine eſſence, and poſſeſſing every divine perfection, glory and happineſs thereto belonging. But in the fulneſs of time, God's co-eſſential, co-equal, and co-eternal Word, aſſumed our humanity to his divinity by divine generation, and of the Word of God, became alſo his Son. In aſſuming this new, he did not lay aſide his former character. His divine ſubſiſtence is immutable, and his divine relation to the Father in that perſonal ſubſiſtence is immutable, as every thing in divinity ever muſt be. Accordingly, though St. John informs us, that the divine Word, by being made fleſh, became the begotten Son of God, and commonly deſcribes him after his incarnation by that name; yet, to ſhow us that he did not lay aſide, but continued alſo in his original character, he, after his incarnation, repreſents him ſtill as the Word of God, *Rev.* xix. 13. By receiving this additional nature, he receives an additional character himſelf, and an additional relation to God. By the acceſſion of a human nature to his divine perſon, he, of the Word of God, becomes Immanuel, God-man; and receiving this acceſſion in the way of generation, he who is the eſſential Word of God in his divine, becomes the Son of God in his complex perſon. This gives him at once the higheſt dignity, perfection, and excellence. To be the ſon of an earthly king, is reckoned

reckoned the higheſt earthly honour to which a child can be born. What honour muſt it then be, to be the Son of God—the Maker and Sovereign of the vaſt univerſe! But honour is not the whole, nay, nor the higheſt dignity implied in this character. With the relation of Son of God, Chriſt poſſeſſes the perſonal character that founds it, and with the relative honour, he has all the real excellence that conſtitutes and adorns that ſuper-eminent character. He poſſeſſes the divine nature of his Father, with all thoſe great and glorious perfections that are eſſential to that nature. Theſe belonged to him eternally as God's co-eſſential Word, and all theſe continue to belong to him as the Son of God, or Word incarnate. No character can give him a nearer connexion with God, nor poſſeſs him of higher excellence than his former one; yet this moſt intimate of all connexions is continued, and ſeconded by one which next to it; and along with it, gives him the endeared relation of his proper Son. No additional perfection can render divinity more perfect; yet his divine perfections, as the Word, continue with him as the Son of God; and have added to them in his complex perſon, all the perfections belonging to his human nature. As God's co-eſſential Word, exiſting in the ſame eſſence and poſſeſſed of the ſame perfections with the firſt perſon, he ever was the object of his ſupreme and infinite love. But this God of love now views him in his complex perſon; views him in that perſon as his Son, his only begotten Son, and loves him with a divine affection extended to his whole perſon, and ſuited to the endearing additional relation which he now bears to him: This character, therefore, of Son of God, be-

comes in every view a source of his highest dignity, and gives him an excellence and glory that has no parallel. Many other beings are called sons of God; and have all some character from, and some relation to him, which found that honourable appellation. Angels are called his sons, *Job* xxxviii. 7. as being the productions of his creative power, and the finite images of his infinite perfection. Men are called his sons, or offspring, *Acts* xvii. 28. as being formed by the great Father of being, and formed after his likeness in those perfections, intellectual and moral, with which our nature was adorned. True Christians are his sons in an additional sense; as being regenerated by his Spirit after his divine image in wisdom and goodness, and invested in all the honours and privileges of his children. But Christ is the Son of God in a sense infinitely higher and properer than any of these. These are his sons by creation, or adoption; Christ is his Son by generation. His whole other children are his sons, by a similar nature. Christ is his begotten Son, who has a nature the same, and the same not only in kind, but which is the peculiar privilege of the Son of God, and which no other son of God, or of man, can claim; he has the very same numerical essence with his Father, though under a different personal subsistence. Correspondent to this superior ground of Sonship, is the infinite super-eminence over all the created children of God, which the Scriptures ascribe to him. Thus, says God, "I will make him my first born, "higher than the kings of the earth," *Psalm* lxxxix. 31. giving him pre-eminence above the highest creatures in this terrestrial world. The same is his declared transcendence above the highest

higheſt created excellences in the heavenly kingdom. For he is made ſo much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they; for unto which of the angels, ſaid he at any time, "Thou art "my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Nay, ſuch is his infinite ſuperiority to the whole creation, angelic as well as human, that when God bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the world, he ſayeth, "Let all the angels of God worſhip "him," *Heb.* i. 4—6. But in what is this infinite ſuperiority repreſented to conſiſt? Angels he declares to be created ſpirits, the Son to be God their Creator; angels to be miniſters of his preſence and kingdom, the Son to be the Prince-royal of heaven, the heir and joint-poſſeſſor with his Father of the throne of the univerſe, while his inferior ſons are only his ſubjects and ſervants, miniſtring to his Majeſty in his celeſtial court, or executing his commands through his extenſive empire. "And of angels he ſayeth, "Who maketh his angels ſpirits, and his mi-"niſters a flame of fire. But unto the Son, "he ſaith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever "and ever. Thou, Lord, in the beginning "haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and "the heavens are the work of thy hands.—But "to which of the angels, ſaid he at any time, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make "thine enemies thy footſtool," *Heb.* i. 7, 8, 10, 13.

This is the fundamental character, and the diſtinguiſhing glory of the great Meſſiah. It communicates to him, as God-man, his Father's nature, which is his higheſt excellence; his Father's image, which is his higheſt perfection; and his Father's love, which is his higheſt bleſſedneſs.

ſedneſs. It makes Chriſt the man that is God's fellow, as God himſelf hath declared, *Zech.* xiii. 7. and poſſeſſor of all the fulneſs, and heir to all the honours and poſſeſſions of God. This, therefore, his divine Father ever repreſents as his Son's diſtinguiſhing character; foretelling it by his prophets, announcing it at his conception and birth by an angel, declaring it with the heavens opened at his baptiſm, and confirming it by raiſing him in power from the dead, exalting him to his right hand in the higheſt heavens, and commanding his whole creation to honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

II. He is the brighteſt and moſt perfect image of his divine Father. Every thing that generates, generates its like. A ſon, as he partakes their nature, ſo he naturally poſſeſſes a reſemblance of his parents. Such is the eſtabliſhed law of God, among human children; and the ſame natural law holds equally as to God's own divine and only begotten Son. As Son of Man, partaker of our nature, he reſembles the ſpecies from which, as to his fleſh, he deſcended, in a rational ſoul and human body; though theſe too are greatly ſuperior to the moſt excellent of his kindred. But the chief conſtituent of his complex perſon is the divine Word; his chief and diſtinguiſhing character in that perſon, is, that he is the Son of God; and as Son of God, one of his nobleſt diſtinctions is, that he is the perfect image of his All-perfect Father. Thus St. Paul aſſures us, that "he is the image of the inviſible "God," *Col.* i. 15. Nay, in language the fulleſt and ſtrongeſt, the ſame apoſtle affirms, that "he is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and "the expreſs image of his perſon," *Heb.* i. 3.

This

This reſemblance of the Deity extends to the general perſon of the Son, conſiſting of a divine and human nature, but lies chiefly in the former. In that reſpect he is God co-eſſential with his Father; and poſſeſſing the very ſame divine nature, poſſeſſes all thoſe perfections that characterize and diſtinguiſh it. Accordingly, if we conſult the ſacred oracles, we ſhall find that there is not one eſſential perfection, belonging to the divine Father, but what belongs equally to his divine and co-eſſential Son. Thus is God an infinite and tranſcendent Spirit, *John* iv. 24. ſo alſo is the Son; for as to their divine eſſence, he declares, "I and my Father are "one," *John* x. 30. Is the Father eternal, who is, was, and is to come, *Rev.* i. 4. the very ſame attribute in the very ſame words, is aſcribed to the Son. "I am Alpha and Ome-"ga, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the "Lord, which is, and which was, and which "is to come, *Rev.* i. 8. Is the Father infinite in eſſence, and ſo preſent with every creature that exiſts through the vaſt univerſe, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 7, 8. ſo likewiſe is the Son. Thus, when his human nature was to be exalted to heaven, and his diſciples to be left behind and to be diſperſed through every nation, and to every quarter of the globe, promulgating his religion; he aſſures them, that in regard to his divine preſence and eſſence, he ſhould ſtill be with them all, and with all their genuine ſucceſſors to the end of the world, *Matth.* xxiv. 19. Is this eternal, infinite Father, without all variableneſs or ſhadow of turning, *James* i. 17. ſo, as to his divine nature, is the Son. Thus what the Pſalmiſt affirmed of the Deity in general, the apoſtle applies to the Son, as ſecond perſon in the

the Godhead. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, "haſt laid the foundations of the earth, and the "heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall "periſh, but thou remaineſt; and they ſhall all "wax old, as doth a garment, and as a veſture "ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be "changed; but thou art the ſame, and thy "years ſhall not fail," *Pſ.* cii. 24, 25, and *Heb.* i. 10—12. Is the Father Almighty, 2 *Cor.* vi. 18. ſo the Son alſo is the Almighty, *Rev.* i. 8. Does the Father know all things, 1 *John* iii. 20. ſo ſays St. Peter of the Son, "Lord, thou "knoweſt all things," *John* xxi. 17. Is the Father poſſeſſed of infinite wiſdom, and called, The only wiſe God, 1 *Tim.* i. 17. the Son alſo is called, "the only wiſe God, our Saviour," *Jude* ver. 25. Is the Father, in ſhort, a perſon of infinite goodneſs and rectitude, purity and truth; ſo alſo is the Son, for "in him dwelleth "all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily," *Col.* ii. 9. And as the reſult of all this infinite perfection, is the Father declared in Scripture to be the "Higheſt," *Luke* i. 32. and "the Bleſſed," *Mark* xiv. 61. ſo is Chriſt the Son declared alſo to be "over all, God, and bleſſed for ever," *Rom.* ix. 5.

But is this image of God which is the glory of his Son, to be confined wholly to his divine nature? By no means. Indeed ſtrictly ſpeaking, Chriſt cannot be called the image of God, as to his eſſence or nature, for the eſſence of the Father and the Word are one and the ſame. When he is conſidered as the image of God in his divine character, it muſt be as he is a diſtinct divine perſon, co-exiſting with the Father in the ſame eſſence, and perfectly ſimilar to him. Or, as this divine perſon is united with human nature,

adorned

adorned with the divine image in wiſdom and goodneſs, majeſty and glory, ſo his being the image of God may denote either that godlike effulgence of divinity through his humanity, or the reſemblance of his human to his divine nature. In either of theſe views this character includes alſo his human nature. And that this nature too is the ſubject of the divine image, the apoſtle plainly intimates when he defines Chriſt to be "the image of "the inviſible God, and the firſt-born of every "creature." *Col.* i. 15. For the divine perſon of Chriſt is no more viſible than that of the Father, and has no other relation to the creatures he hath made: ſo that theſe characters expreſs his complex perſon, and ſo include his humanity as a ſubject alſo of the divine image. His human nature indeed, eſſentially and ſeparately conſidered, gave him the likeneſs of humanity; but conſidered in that purity and perfection in which it was created, the glory to which it is exalted, and the perſonal union with its Maker which it ever poſſeſſes, it raiſes him far above the higheſt creatures, and exhibits the ſtrongeſt reſemblance of divinity creation affords. In his generation and while he converſed with men, he appeared more in the likeneſs of men; but in his reſurrection from the dead and aſcenſion into heaven, which the Scripture metaphorically repreſents as his ſecond generation, he appeared more fully in the image of God. Yet in every ſtate of his exiſtence did the Son of God, even in his human nature, bear a moſt ſtriking reſemblance to his divine Father. Formed not by natural generation from fallen beings, as other men, but by ſupernatural divine power, as became the Son of God, he was free of that ſinful taint that infects all the natural progeny of degenerate Adam. His ſoul, as became the moſt intimate

intimate associate of the divine Logos, was created of the most excellent nature, and of the most capacious natural powers intellectual and active. These powers were adorned with the bright lineaments of his Father's image in wisdom, rectitude, and goodness, from their very creation; for from his generation was he "sanctified and so sent into the world," *John* x. 36. The Divine Spirit was given to him in all his gifts and graces in an immeasurable degree, to form this begotten, as he does the adopted Sons of God, after the divine image, *John* iii. 34. and to rest upon him as a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of council and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, *Isa.* xi. 2. Besides all this, he enjoyed a source of improvement and perfection, which none but himself could ever possess, even a personal union and communion of his human nature with that infinite source of light and perfection, his divine person. This communication of divine influence from his divine nature, and from the Holy Spirit essentially connected with that nature, to his humanity, like the energy of our souls towards our bodies, was indeed voluntary, and wisely adapted to the various stages through which he had to pass, and to the parts he had to act for the salvation of mankind. By all these means of improvement, was the Son of God formed after his Father's image, in the highest perfection which his human nature in the different estates of its being would admit. His capacious mind was stored with treasures of knowledge and wisdom, derived immediately from the omniscient mind divine, with which it was so closely connected. His will ever righteous, was, from his godlike wisdom, raised to the highest moral rectitude, resembling

fembling the will divine. His heart glowed with the moſt generous goodneſs and benevolence, reſembling God his Father, whoſe higheſt and moſt amiable character is that he is love, 1 *John* iv. 8. So conſummate was his wiſdom, that he never was guilty of one inſtance of folly. So perfect his virtue, as rendered him ſuperior to every aſſault of vice. So inviolable from his firſt exiſtence were his principles of univerſal goodneſs, as no temptation could corrupt. So perfect through his whole life were his piety and virtue, as no extent of the divine law could exceed; and what no man, no angel, what not the higheſt created being, in its firſt and probationary ſtate, can attain, rendered the man Chriſt Jeſus abſolutely impeccable. During his whole life on earth, his character was one uniform diſplay of knowledge the moſt infallible, of wiſdom the moſt conſummate, of purity the moſt eminent, of piety the moſt ſublime, of benevolence and kindneſs the moſt generous and extenſive. Never was ſuch godlike perfection to be found in man; never did angel, or the higheſt created being, in excellence and goodneſs ſo reſemble God.

But if in his ſtate of minority, as it were, upon earth, the holy Jeſus ſo much reſembled his Father, much more does he reſemble him in his ſtate of complete perfection in heaven. His body is ſpiritualized and raiſed to the higheſt reſemblance of his ſoul, and his ſoul to the higheſt reſemblance of God, that their finite natures will admit. Univerſal knowledge and wiſdom, rectitude and goodneſs, in a ſuper-eminent degree, dignify and exalt his ſoul within, while a godlike majeſty and glory, transfuſed from its indwelling Deity, adorn his body without. As if a cryſtalline globe were caſt round the body of the ſun,

ſun, which though it remained diſtinct from it, yet receiving and tranſmitting its rays, would ſtrongly reſemble the glorious orb it contained, ſo, by its perſonal union with, and its conformation to the Deity in its glorification in heaven, the human nature of Chriſt highly reſembles his divine. The glory of the Deity tranſmitted through his humanity, renders him the image of the inviſible God; and in his complex perſon as God-man, he is the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon. Other ſons bear ſome reſemblance of God their Father, in the ſpirituality of their natures, and the powers intellectual and moral with which their natures are endowed, but poſſeſs nothing of real divinity. Chriſt in his human nature poſſeſſes this ſimilitude to God above all created beings; and what raiſes him infinitely above them all, he as the divine Word made fleſh is God equal with the Father, for in him dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily. They are the created children of God, and have only a finite reſemblance of their maker. He is God's begotten Son, who has a divine as well as a created nature, and who therefore is the perfect and viſible image of the inviſible God, and the firſt-born of every creature, 1 *Col.* i. 15. which ſuggeſts to us.

III. That he is the head or chief of the creation of God. The former character referred chiefly to his divinity, this relates chiefly to his humanity; yet, as his being the image of God extended alſo to his human, ſo his being the chief of God's creation reſults in a high degree from his divine nature. The creation of God is filled with orders of intelligent beings, riſing from men to angels and archangels, cherubim

cherubim and seraphim, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, in numbers and natures which we cannot fully understand in our present state. These are all children of the same divine Father, and rise in beautiful gradation of nature and excellence, dignity and glory, one above another, from the fainteſt to the brighteſt image of their great Original. But however excellent in perfection, or exalted in dignity, any of these created sons of the Almighty may be, his only begotten Son far transcends them all. His human nature connects him more particularly with the human kind, which is the loweſt species we know of in the intelligent creation. Yet, by its personal co-existence with all-perfect divinity, and the godlike perfection and glory it poſſeſſes, it is raiſed in excellence and dignity above the higheſt of God's creation, and is exalted to be the head and Lord of all. His exiſtence in this lower world, like that of his human brethren, was a ſtate of gradual formation towards its compleat and immortal nature, and therefore his reſurrection is beautifully repreſented as his compleat generation and birth. And he is in this reſpect called the "firſt-begotten, and the firſt-born from the dead," *Rev.* i. 5. *Col.* i. 18. And David's prediction of his generation, *Pſ.* ii. 7, is applied to his reſurrection, *Acts* xiii. 33. for though his incarnation made him the ſon of God, his reſurrection raiſed him to the complete perfection and glory belonging to that character. During his reſidence among men, he appeared rather as man and the ſon of man. At his exaltation to God, he appeared in all the perfection and glory of the Son of God. While he tabernacled on earth, he condeſcended for our ſalvation to take upon him the form of a ſervant,

ſervant, and deſcended lower than the loweſt of his human brethren. But ſo ſoon as this ſtate of ſelf-abaſement was over, he ſhone forth in all his dignity and excellence "the man who was God's "fellow," *Zech.* xiii. 7. and infinitely higher than the higheſt of creation. His body is adorned with univerſal ſplendor and glory, brighter than the ſun, and his ſoul with wiſdom and goodneſs, which far tranſcend the nobleſt intelligences. This unequalled perfection of his humanity raiſes him in excellence, and the perſonal union it has with the indwelling Deity gives him in dignity infinitely the pre-eminence above the whole creation, and exalts him even in his loweſt nature, to be the head and Lord of the univerſe.

But ſhould we conſider the Son of God in his divine character, ſuperadding to the higheſt perfection of the human the infinitely greater perfection of the divine nature, there all compariſon with creation is loſt; for what proportion can there be between infinite and finite, between the divine Word the equal of the Father, and the higheſt creature that can or does exiſt? The moſt glorious angels in heaven vaniſh in his preſence, as the ſtars of the ſky upon the appearance of the ſun. His glorious humanity, though it obſcures all created excellence, is here itſelf loſt in that infinitely more glorious nature into which it is aſſumed; and the Son of God complexly conſidered, ſtands on the whole infinitely nearer to the Deity, than to the higheſt of the creation. For his divinity, as it is infinitely the moſt glorious and perfect, ſo it is infinitely the greateſt conſtituent of the Son of God. But as his divinity connects him with God, and makes him equal with God; ſo his humanity connects him with the creatures, and by its excellence and dignity, places him at

at the head of the universe; and both conjoin'd in the constitution of his person, make him in one respect the Creator of all things, and in another, the head and glory of his creation. Thus says the Psalmist of him, "Thou art fairer than the children of men, grace is poured into thy lips, "for God hath blessed thee for ever; and again "God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with "the oil of gladness above thy fellows." *Psal.* xlv. ii. 7. And the apostle affirms his preminence to angels. "For to which of the angels "said he, at any time, Thou art my Son, this "day have I begotten thee, and sit thou on my "right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy "footstool." But when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he says, "Let all the "angels of God worship him," *Heb.* i. 5, 6, 13. In his state of humiliation on earth, his glory was veiled under human flesh, and he was made a little lower than the angels by his suffering of death, but is now crowned with glory and honour, chap. ii. 9. Raised from the dead, God set him at his own right hand, in the highest heavens. There his divinity diffuses itself full in and over his humanity, not deifying it indeed, but rendering it the likest and the nearest to Deity, its created nature can be. There he is placed by his Father, on his right hand, "Far above all "principality and power, and might, and domi-"nion, and every name that is named, not only "in this world, but in that which is to come," *Eph.* i. 20, 21. And there he reigns, the confessed Lord and glory of the creation, in whom his Father supremely delights, and whom his whole empire of virtuous beings, from the lowest to the highest, contemplate with wonder, reverence and love, and esteem it their honour to serve,

ſerve, their glory to reſemble, and their happineſs to enjoy for ever and ever.

IV. This Son of God is the conjunction of all being and perfection, and the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and of the various orders of creation with one another. Theſe comprehenſive characters relate to his whole complex perſon; his being the only begotten Son and perfect image of his Father, reſpected chiefly his divinity; his being the firſt-born and head of the creation, regarded chiefly his humanity, though they both included alſo his other natures. But this comprehends directly and at once, both his deity and humanity, and ſo repreſents the excellence and glory of his general perſon.

Chriſt is a conjunction of all being, and of all in the higheſt poſſible perfection. The whole intelligent ſyſtem of being, ſo far as we are informed of it, includes the great eternal and infinite Spirit, even God; pure and finite ſpirits, created by him, which we call angels; and ſpirits connected with material bodies, as men. The firſt of theſe ſtands infinitely ſuperior to and diſtinct from all created eſſences, yet comes under the generical claſs of being. Of theſe claſſes of being, the two firſt are perfectly ſimple and homogeneous, the laſt is a compound one. Man, though the loweſt, is the moſt wonderful being that we know in the creation; he is a conjunction and abridgement of all created nature. His ſoul connects him with the angelic, his body with the animal creation, ſo that the ſpiritual and material worlds unite in our perſon. But he who is the Son of God, and the Son of Man, is yet greatly more wonderful: for in him, not only every ſpecies of created being, but the infinite Creator too, are perſonally united. His

ſubſiſtence

ſubſiſtence as the divine Word eſſentially unites him with God; his glorious ſoul ſtands related to the whole ſpiritual creation of angels and men; yet, formed for union with his divine perſon on the one hand, and his human body on the other, it both riſes above angels, and yet condeſcends by its union with a human body to claſs with men, and ſo gives Chriſt in a ſpecial manner the nature of man.

But as all theſe excellent natures are united in Chriſt, ſo they are all united in him in their higheſt perfection. As God, he is the Moſt High God, equal with the other divine ſubſiſtences in the Godhead; for there are no degrees, and no differences in an infinite being. As a created ſpirit, his ſoul in nature is allied to all created ſpirits; yet in excellence and perfection is ſuperior to them all. As man, he poſſeſſes the ſame ſpecific nature with all his brethren; but that human nature is raiſed to the higheſt excellence and glory, of which it is ſuſceptible, and from its co-exiſtence with the divinity, to a dignity which the higheſt of creation can never enjoy. Uniting theſe natures, he unites their perfections; and uniting theſe natures in their higheſt pitch of perfection, he unites all their perfections in the higheſt degree. Every divine and infinite perfection, of eternal exiſtence, infinite eſſence, all-ſufficient fulneſs, omnipotent power, omniſcient knowledge, infallible wiſdom, invariable rectitude, and boundleſs goodneſs, eſſential to the Deity, and poſſeſſed by the other co-eſſential ſubſiſtences in that Deity, are in the ſame ſupreme degree poſſeſſed by the Son. All thoſe finite, yet glorious excellences, conferred by the Father of being and perfection on his created children, and reſembling thoſe in their all-perfect Father, are in their

higheſt degree beſtowed upon him, who, in pre-eminence above the whole creation, is his begotten, his only begotten Son. As he is the conjunction of univerſal being, ſo he is alſo the aſſemblage of all perfection. No wonder then that the firſt character given of him by the prophet, ſhould be פלא Wonderful, *Iſai.* ix. 6. or that the firſt article ſtated by the apoſtle in the myſtery of godlineſs, ſhould be this, "God manifeſted "in the fleſh," 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. for every ſpecies of nature, infinite and finite, ſelf-exiſtent and created, every ſpecies of excellent eſſence and perfection, divine, angelic and human, by the moſt myſterious conjunction are united in the perſon of the Son of God.

Thus uniting all being in the conſtitution of his perſon, this glorious Immanuel becomes the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and of the different parts of creation with each other. God is connected with the univerſe as its Creator, Preſerver, and Lord; and by this their common Maker and Lord, and the beautiful dependence and gradation he hath eſtabliſhed through the great ſyſtem, are all the parts of it cloſely connected. By all theſe tyes does Chriſt, as God, connect the various parts of creation; "for by him were all "things created, and by him do they all conſiſt," *Col.* i. 16, 17. But the grand connecting bond between God and creation, and between the different parts of creation with one another, is the Son of God. What the Stoics of old, and Spinoziſts of late, falſely held as to the union between God and the univerſe, holds in a high degree in God's Son our Saviour; here God is embodied with a created nature; here he is connected with the ſpiritual ſyſtem in the union of the

the divine Word with Chriſt's human ſoul, Spirit finite with infinite, human with divine; and through its connection with his human body, he is connected, though leſs cloſely, with the material ſyſtem. But as he connects God with creation, and creation with God, ſo he connects the great parts of creation one with another. His human nature, though ſpecifically the loweſt, yet in that ſuper-eminent excellence in which he hath aſſumed it, ranks too with every ſuperior order of created intelligences, and ſurpaſſes far the higheſt of them; yet from the higheſt to the loweſt connects the whole, gives them a nearer relation to God and to each other, and lays a firmer ground of friendſhip with both, than otherwiſe had been enjoyed. In ſhort, this glorious perſon fills up the infinite chaſm, and forms the connecting link in the chain of univerſal being, between God and his creation. Or like the head in the human ſyſtem, that unites the ſpirit with its inferior animal body, poſſeſſes the nature of both, and all the qualities of both, and all theſe qualities in their higheſt perfection, and is the eſtabliſhed bond of union and intercourſe between the whole, ſo is the ſecond perſon in the Godhead united with our nature. He connects God with creation, and creation with God; the intellectual with the material, and the various orders of created intelligences with each other, in bands that ſhall never be diſſolved. Jeſus is the Son at once of God and of man, and the cement of everlaſting union betwixt them. This begotten Son connects the divine Father of the univerſe in cloſer and more endearing conjunction with his created children; and by the conſtitution of his mediatorial perſon, as well as by the exerciſe of his mediatorial offices, is form-

ed to unite God and his creation, in love and friendſhip that ſhall endure for ever. This our Saviour himſelf intimates, when he thus prays to his Father in behalf of his church, "that they "all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and "I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us. "I in them and thou in me, that they may be "made perfect in one, and that the world may "know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved "them, as thou haſt loved me," *John* xvii. 21, 23. This the apoſtle declares at large, when he aſſures us, "it was the purpoſe of God, that in "the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he "might gather together in one, or reunite under "one head," as the word ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι ſignifies, "all things in Chriſt, both which are in "heaven, and which are on earth, even in him," *Eph.* i. 10. "For in him it pleaſed the Father, "that all fulneſs ſhould dwell, and having made "peace through the blood of his croſs, by him "to reconcile all things to himſelf, even by him, "whether they be things on earth, or things in "heaven," *Col.* i. 19, 20. But this naturally brings us forward from the perſon to the offices of the Son of God, which is to be the ſubject of the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the great and important Offices the Son of God was to execute.

WHEN an extraordinary perſon is, by divine appointment, ſent forth into the world, ſome adequate end muſt needs be deſigned by it; for the allwiſe Creator and ruler of the univerſe can do nothing in vain. The moſt extraordinary perſon that ever appeared in the world, was the Son of God. In him deity and humanity, the creator and an abridgment of his creation, are united, and co-exiſt in the ſame perſon; and this, perſon, though infinitely the higheſt and holieſt that ever partook a created nature, was ſubjected, as we ſhall ſee, to the deepeſt abaſement and ſufferings that ever were endured. This moſt wonderful phænomenon, in the moral world, hath employed the ſcrutiny, not only of human but angelic minds, from its firſt exhibition, and muſt excite the mingled wonder, ſatisfaction, and joy of God's rational creation to endleſs ages. But, though no finite intelligence ſhall ever be able fully to comprehend the conſtitution of this glorious perſon, and all the great deſigns effected by his agency; yet, every candid and diſcerning mind, that attends to the various offices divine and human he was to perform, and to the honour thence reſulting to God and the happineſs to his creatures, muſt be convinced, that a perſon only who was God and Man could perform theſe offices, and that this whole ſcheme is not only

moſt worthy of God, but the moſt conſummate contrivance of his wiſdom and manifeſtation of his goodneſs, that ever was given to his rational creation. From the perſonal then, let us proceed to conſider and unfold the official character of the Son of God. To mention and explain at large, all the particular offices this illuſtrious perſon was to execute, were inconſiſtent with the conciſeneſs of our preſent plan. We ſhall, therefore, repreſent thoſe offices that are more capital and comprehenſive, together with their neceſſity and our Saviour's execution of them, in a general way; by which the neceſſity and propriety of his perſonal character, and his important offices for the honour of his Father and the happineſs of his brethren, will be clearly perceived.

I. This illuſtrious perſon was to be the Saviour of his periſhing brethren of mankind. This is the primary office of the Son of God with regard to the creation, and comprehends all his particular offices with reſpect to mankind; and, therefore, this claims our firſt conſideration. It was our nature particularly into which he was born, for it was our ſalvation in a ſpecial manner he was deſigned to accompliſh. Accordingly, the firſt and the moſt general official name, by which he was called, is Jeſus; given him for this expreſs reaſon, that he was to ſave his people from their ſins, *Matth.* i. 21.

By the temptations of Satan, and their own ſinful compliance with them, the firſt parents of our human race had tranſgreſſed thoſe juſt laws their great Maker preſcribed to them, for the preſervation and improvement of their own perfection and happineſs, and the communication of the ſame perfection and happineſs to their offspring

offspring. By this moſt criminal offence, they had forfeited to themſelves and their poſterity, all thoſe bleſſings which the divine goodneſs had promiſed as the reward of their obedience; and involved both in all thoſe evils, which are either the natural conſequence, or the juſt and declared puniſhment of their tranſgreſſion. We had loſt the original perfection of our nature in knowledge, rectitude and goodneſs, and were involved in much imperfection and depravity. In conſequence of this and our own actual ſins proceeding from it, we had forfeited the favour of God, which is our chief good, and incurred his diſpleaſure and the effects of it, which is our greateſt miſery. As to our body, we had forfeited the ſupernatural bleſſing of immortality, which ſhould have been the reward, and a moſt proper one, of a pure and guiltleſs ſoul, and were ſunk down to that ſtate of diſeaſe and mortality, that are the conſequence of animal nature and the declared puniſhment of that ſin, by which ſupernatural perfection of mind and immortality of body were forfeited to mankind. As the future effect of theſe evils, we had forfeited life eternal in the everlaſting image and enjoyment of God in a higher and happier world, and rendered ourſelves, ſoul and body, obnoxious by our ſins to everlaſting deſtruction. Such were the ſad loſſes we had ſuſtained, and the many dreadful evils in which we were involved. What completed our miſery was, that we had neither inclination nor ability to extricate ourſelves from theſe terrible evils, and recover the happineſs from which we had fallen. The rectitude of the Deity, and the nature of things required perfect conformity to his image, as the firſt foundation of happineſs, and to qua-

lify us for the expreſſions of his favour to complete it. The ſame rectitude of the divine nature, and the eſtabliſhed laws of his moral government, required condign atonement by ſufferings and death to expiate our ſins, and procure our deliverance from future puniſhments, and perfect future obedience to his laws, to give us a title to heaven and eternal happineſs. But how impracticable were theſe to fallen mankind! weak and depraved creatures, we could not recover our proper perfection in our Father's image, the neceſſary foundation of his favour and our own happineſs. Finite and ſinful creatures, we could as little make a proper ſatisfaction for our numberleſs ſins committed againſt the Majeſty of God, and in violation of the infinite obligations we are under to obey him, ſo as to appeaſe his juſt diſpleaſure and regain his favour. Impure and guilty, we could never acquire either meetneſs or title to his heavenly kingdom; but muſt have ſunk, at laſt, into the regions of darkneſs and deſtruction for ever. But what could never have been effected by us, or by the ordinary eſtabliſhment of his moral government, the gracious Father of the univerſe had determined to accompliſh by an extraordinary, but moſt God-like diſpenſation of his grace. Mankind, though they had fallen by their own default, yet they had fallen alſo through the temptations of a ſuperior, malicious, and artful adverſary. Our firſt parents had been overcome by him, even in their primæval purity and perfection. Their poſterity, through this fall of their parents, were born into life, deſtitute of original rectitude, and expoſed from their firſt exiſtence to the joint-influence of a ſenſualizing nature, a ſinful world, and the temptations of the

the devil; circumſtances extremely unfavourable to their virtue and happineſs. In ſtrict juſtice we could never be intitled to the divine favour and ſalvation, all our miſeries being owing chiefly to ourſelves; yet, no ſpecies of being could be more proper objects of the divine compaſſion. There were none whoſe recovery would contribute more to the glory of God, and the good of his creation; and therefore none, for whoſe ſalvation every perfection of the divine nature would more engage him to interpoſe. This, bleſſed be his gracious name, was actually the caſe. His goodneſs and mercy moved our ſalvation, and his wiſdom and rectitude deviſed the method by which it ſhould be accompliſhed. The firſt and fundamental part of the grand ſcheme was to obtain a proper ſatisfaction for our ſins, by which we might be delivered from guilt and condemnation, and reſtored to juſtification and life, conſiſtently with the authority of the divine laws and government, and the happineſs of God's rational empire as dependent on their obſervance of them. To accompliſh this and the other great purpoſes of his mediation, it was reſolved in the councils of the Sacred Trinity, that the eternal Word ſhould aſſume our nature into union with his divine perſon, thereby becoming, at once, the Son of God and Man, and Mediator betwixt them. By this, he would dignify our inferior nature, and be qualified, by his obedience and atonement, to make ſatisfaction for our ſins, and procure our redemption, not only in perfect conſiſtency with the honour of God and the obedience and happineſs of his rational creation, but to their higheſt advancement. To this office, therefore, he was deſtined from thoſe eternal ages in which the plan of the univerſe

and of our ſalvation was deſigned; and we were choſen in him, before the foundation of the world, *Eph.* i. 4. For this office, he was generated and born into our nature at the appointed period; "for when the fulneſs of time was "come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a "woman, made under the law, to redeem them "that were under the law, that we might re-"ceive the adoption of ſons," *Gal.* iv. 4. That our Maker might be completely qualified to be our Redeemer, he, according to the ancient type of him, *Ruth* iv. 4, 5. became our near kinſman. He aſſumed our nature in ſoul and body, that in the ſame nature that tranſgreſſed the divine law he might obey it, and that in the ſame nature that had diſhonoured God by ſin, he might honour him by an infinite ſatisfaction for ſin. With our nature he aſſumed our place, ſubſtituting himſelf in our ſtead, that the puniſhment due to our ſins might be legally transferred and inflicted upon him, and the merits of his ſatisfaction be extended, and its bleſſings beſtowed upon us. And in this public character he became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, that he might procure our redemption from ſin and miſery, and our recovery to every bleſſing of complete happineſs; "for he took "not fallen angels to redeem them," as the original imports, "but the ſeed of Abraham;" whoſe ſeed he was to be, and was to ſave all out of all nations, who ſhould, like faithful Abraham, believe in and obey him, *Gal.* iii. 8. "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be "made like unto his brethren, that he might "be a merciful and faithful High Prieſt in things "pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for "the ſins of the people," *Heb.* ii. 16, 17.

In

In this general character of our Saviour, Christ unites and executes every mediatorial office, and hath purchased and bestows whatever is necessary for our complete salvation. Had we lost the proper perfection of our rational nature in a conformity to God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and sunk into opposite ignorance, depravity and impurity; this only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, effects this first and leading part of our salvation. As our great prophet, he hath given us in his Gospel a complete revelation of all divine truth necessary to our instruction. He bestows his divine Spirit to give these truths their proper convincing evidence on our minds, and their proper converting and sanctifying influence upon our hearts and lives. By these he translates us from darkness into light, enables us to believe and comply with his Gospel, turns us from impiety and impurity to religion and holiness, restores gradually our natures to their orginal perfection, makes us the children of God by regeneration, after his image, as expressed in his begotten Son our elder brother, and animating us with all the principles, and adorning us with the graces of the divine and Christian life, fits us for every duty and for every blessing of the Christian character. Had we by sin forfeited the divine favour and acceptance, and incurred his displeasure and liableness to his wrath, the Son of God, as our great High Priest, gave himself for us a proper and infinite atonement, to expiate our guilt and procure our salvation. By the infinite merits of his obedience and death, he hath made the fullest satisfaction for all our sins, and purchased for us pardon and access into the divine favour, upon our faith and repentance, and

exalted a Prince and Saviour to give both repentance unto Iſrael and the forgiveneſs of ſins, *Acts* v. 31. Were we by ſin deprived of immortality and made liable to death, Chriſt, as our Redeemer, delivers us by his merits from the ſting of death, and changes it from being the deſpairful gate to deſtruction, to be the way to life eternal; and, as our complete deliverer, he, by his power, will raiſe in due time our bodies from corruption and mortality, to incorruption, life, and glory everlaſting; "for as "the children are partakers of fleſh and blood, "he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, "that through death he might deſtroy him that "had the power of death, that is the devil, "and deliver them, who through fear of death "were all their life-time ſubject to bondage," *Heb.* ii. 14, 15.

Finally, had we by ſin forfeited life everlaſting in heaven, and become liable to death eternal in hell, our complete Saviour hath, by his atonement and obedience, procured our deliverance from future condemnation and puniſhment, and redeemed to us the inheritance of heaven which we had forfeited. He will come again as judge of the world, at the conſummation of the great ſcheme, and take us to himſelf into the heavenly manſions he hath purchaſed for us, where, adorned with his image in full perfection, we ſhall be admitted into the immediate preſence of our Father and Redeemer, behold their glory, and enjoy all the felicities heaven furniſhes out, or our exalted natures can deſire and poſſeſs for ever and ever. "For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his "only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in "him might not periſh, but have everlaſting "life: for God ſent not his Son into the world,

"to

"to condemn the world, but that the world "through him might be ſaved," *John* iii. 16. 17.

II. This glorious Son of God is the great mediator, the general reconciler, and uniting head of the creation.

The good offices of the Son of God, though exerted in an eminent degree, toward his brethren of mankind, are far from being confined to the children of men. They are univerſal, as the creation he had formed, and contribute to the happineſs of every ſpecies of created intelligences. The human, indeed, was the nature his infinite goodneſs condeſcended to aſſume: and the humankind were to be the primary objects of his mediatorial benignity. But the human contains a connection with ſuperior natures, and theſe ſuperior as well as our inferior natures, all created by the ſame eternal Word, were to be farther connected with God and with one another, by this Word incarnate, God's illuſtrious Son.

The diſobedience of man by the temptations of Satan had introduced a very general diſcord into the rational world. Rebellious man had become an enemy to God, his Maker and Lord, and God, infinitely holy and juſt, muſt have been an enemy to man. Angels, who would have been the friends of men, had we remained in our duty, through our rebellion againſt their and our Father had become their enemies, as they neceſſarily are to all who are enemies to God and goodneſs. The Jews, from whence the promiſed Meſſiah was more directly to ſpring, were neceſſarily divided from the Gentiles by the ceremonial law, till the time of his appearance; and overvaluing themſelves on account of their religious privileges held all their heathen brethren in ſovereign contempt. The Gentiles, ignorant of the true, and

and blindly devoted to every falſe religion, piqued themſelves on their learning and policy, and repaid the contempt of the Jews with equal prejudice and diſdain. Every nation on earth having their different gods, their different religions, laws and policy, were in oppoſition to each other, having no cement of union, but what the force of their common conquerors impoſed; nor bond of friendſhip, but what their common nature or neceſſities gave them: ſo that a general oppoſition of principles long prevailed among mankind to their general hurt.

None but the Son of God could reconcile theſe differences, and reſtore peace and amity between God and his creatures, and between theſe different creatures who were thus at variance. To effect theſe great purpoſes ſo worthy of God, was one capital deſign of God's uniting his eſſential Word with created nature, and of this divine perſon by that union becoming the Son of God. The diſcord had originated from man's diſobedience, aud by the perſonal union of God with our nature, and the offices he was therein to perform, did the divine wiſdom ſee it fit and neceſſary to remove it. Uniting every nature divine and created in the conſtitution of his perſon, he was admirably qualified, as general mediator, for reconciling by his offices theſe diſcordant parties, and re-uniting them in the moſt honourable and eternal friendſhip. This we are aſſured was the gracious purpoſe of God, in ſending his Son into the world, even "that in the diſpenſation of "the fulneſs of times, he might gather together "in one, all things in Chriſt, both which are "in heaven, and which are on earth," *Eph.* i. 10. And this, we know, he has already in a great degree effected, and will accompliſh fully in the courſe

courſe of his mediation. Thus, was man, by ſin, become a rebel to his Almighty Creator and Lord, Chriſt, by his word and ſpirit, reconciles us to him, bringing us into a filial regard to our heavenly Father, and a dutiful ſubmiſſion to the laws of his grace and government. "For all "things are of God, who hath reconciled us to "himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given to us "the miniſtry of reconciliation," 2 *Cor.* v. 18. Was the righteous Lord of the univerſe moſt juſtly offended with his creatures who had turned rebels againſt him, Chriſt by his full atonement for our offences on earth, and his ever prevalent interceſſion as our advocate in heaven, hath rendered his great Father reconcileable to all men; and reconciled to all ſuch as comply with his goſpel. "For God is in Chriſt, reconciling "the world unto himſelf, not imputing their "treſpaſſes unto them," 2 *Cor.* v. 19. Had angels, who remained faithful to their ſovereign, become enemies to man who had wickedly revolted from him, they are now, upon this reconciliation of man to God, and of God to man, by this glorious Mediator, made moſt benevolent and friendly. They rejoice in the recovery of their human brethren, by the labours and merits of our gracious Redeemer, from ſin and woe to God and happineſs. They triumph in the victories gained by the captain of ſalvation over the policy and malice of the powers of darkneſs. They exult in the vaſt acceſſion of virtuous and happy beings made to the empire of God, by the mighty atchievements of his Son. With their whole might they contribute to the advancement of the glorious ſcheme, acting as miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth by our common Creator and Lord, to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation,

ſalvation, *Heb.* i. 14. And when the grand deſign is conſummated, then ſhall man and angels not only be reconciled, but united in the higheſt and moſt inalterable friendſhip, when through the merits and grace of the Son of God, we the younger ſons of the heaven-born family, having paſſed through our ſtate of minority, are made completely the Sons of God by the reſurrection. And having become ισαγγελοι, equal or like unto the angels, as our Lord aſſures us, *Luke* xx. 36. ſhall be advanced to the ſame heaven, and enjoy the ſame ſupreme bleſſedneſs with theſe illuſtrious and benevolent beings through eternal ages. Farther,

Had theſe two diviſions of mankind, the Jews and the Gentiles, been long in a ſtate of mutual enmity, the great reconciler hath removed the occaſions of diſcord, that of enemies they might be friends. In his generation and birth, though immediately and chiefly of the Jews, he was alſo, as to ſeveral of his anceſtors, allied to the Gentiles. By his obedience and ſacrifice, he fulfilled and aboliſhed the ceremonial law, which, like the partition wall in the temple that divided the Jews and the Gentiles, had long divided the Jewiſh and the Gentile worlds. He purchaſed ſalvation for both, reveals it to both, and on their belief of his revelation, beſtows it equally on both, for "he is a light to lighten the Gentiles, and "the glory of Iſrael," *Luke* ii. 32. He hath eſtabliſhed a diſpenſation of religion, in which neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but a new creature, and faith which worketh by love. On mens compliance with this nobleſt of religions, both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God as their Father, united to the Son of God as their Saviour and Lord, animated

animated by the ſame Divine Spirit, made the happy members of the ſame church on earth, and ſhall be incorporated into one general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born in heaven for ever: "For he is our peace, ſays the apoſtle, "who hath made both one, and hath broken "down the middle wall of partition between us; "having aboliſhed in his fleſh the law of com-"mandments contained in ordinances, for to "make in himſelf, of twain, one new man; ſo "making peace; and that he might reconcile "both unto God in one body by the croſs, "having ſlain the enmity thereby, and came "and preached peace to them which were "afar off, and to them that were near: for "through him we both have an acceſs by one "Spirit unto the Father," *Eph.* ii. 14, 18.

In fine Chriſt hath laid the firmeſt foundation of reconciliation and friendſhip among all mankind in time, and on their proper compliance with his goſpel, of friendſhip the moſt exalted and permanent through eternity. He hath introduced a religion calculated to be the religion of mankind; a religion, like its benevolent author, whoſe ſpirit is goodneſs, and whoſe law is love, and of which the whole tendency and aim is to reconcile and unite men to God, in true piety and holineſs, and to one another in charity and love. To the tyes of friendſhip which we have as men, it hath ſuperadded the more tender and endearing ones that cement us as Chriſtians. He unites men in the ſame moſt excellent religion; and makes all who ſincerely embrace it, children of the ſame divine Father, brethren of the ſame Redeemer, and partakers of the ſame Spirit and grace, and fellow-heirs of heaven and eternal glory. Conſiderations which have the moſt pow-

erful tendency to extinguish every hostile and malevolent disposition, and to inspire universal benevolence among all who truly feel their divine influence. And when his grand uniting plan is accomplished, then shall all the friends of God and goodness, a number which no man can number, whom he has reconciled to God, to himself, and to one another in time, out of all kindreds, and nations, and languages, be united in universal love through never ending ages.

Thus is the Son of God the general mediator of reconciliation and bond of union and friendship between God Most High, and his great empire of obedient or redeemed creatures. For it hath pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, even by him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven, *Col.* i. 19, 20. He unites, we have seen, universal nature in the constitution of his person: and he unites universal being by his office of mediator, for which that person was constituted. In both he is the grand medium and bond of union and communion, love and friendship, between God and his creation, uniting God with created nature, angels to men, men to angels, God to the whole, and the whole to God, and to each other in harmony and union that shall never be dissolved. He restores the friendship and peace when it was broken, he guaranties it where continued or restored. And having begun and carried on his Godlike design in time, he will complete it at the consummation of the world; and remaining in his person the indissolved bond of union between God and his obedient or redeemed subjects,

will

will by his character and offices preſerve that union inviolate to eternity.

III. The Son of God is the illuſtrious ſubduer and deſtroyer of Satan's kingdom, and the expeller of vice and irreclaimably vicious beings out of his Father's empire.

This office was moſt neceſſary to the ſalvation of mankind, and the reconciliation Chriſt was to accompliſh and preſerve in the creation of God. Satan, the arch-rebel againſt God, had revolted from allegiance to his Maker and ſovereign, and drawn many of God's angelic ſubjects into the ſame criminal apoſtaſy. Baniſhed with his wicked aſſociates from the manſions of purity, he next ſeduced our firſt parents into a ſimilar diſobedience. The dominion he gained over the parents he hath maintained in a great degree over their fallen poſterity, from age to age, in this manner adding man to his angelic ſubjects, and eſtabliſhing a kingdom of impiety, vice, and miſery, in the world, in oppoſition to God's empire of goodneſs and happineſs. Thus he is called "the prince of the power of the air, the "ſpirit that now worketh in the children of "diſobedience," *Eph.* ii. 2. "The prince of "this world," from the dominion over it he poſſeſſes, *John* xii. 13. And "the God of this "world," 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. from the religious worſhip actually performed to him, and his aſſociates, 2 *Kings*, i. 2, 3. *Pſa.* cvi. 37. 1 *Cor.* x. 20. by deluded mortals, and the regards all wicked beings give to him, in preference to God. This kingdom of Satan is founded in ignorance, conſiſts in impiety and vice, is confirmed by the dominion of ſin and bands of guilt, in which its ſlaves are involved, and tends directly to the diſhonour

dishonour of God, and the eternal destruction of his rational creatures. As it had commenced from the seduction and fall of our first parents, it had enlarged as the world of fallen mankind enlarged. And though, even in the most degenerate ages, God always had a church of wise and well affected subjects, yet by the artifices of Satan, and mens own depravity, a great part of the human kind had, with equal folly and wickedness, chosen rather to be the slaves of Satan their destroyer, than dutiful subjects of God their Creator and Lord. At the time of our Saviour's appearance, it had arrived at its greatest height, in that ignorance of the true God and religion, and that worship of false and impure deities and devils, and the practice of impiety, unrighteousness and impurity that had overrun the world. Many expedients had the Divine Goodness employed to check the progress of these malignant beings, and reclaim his human offspring to their duty and happiness. Revelations of the true God, and of his laws and grace were given for their instruction. Prophets were sent to admonish them of their sin, and call them to reformation. The most aweful punishments were denounced, and on proper occasions inflicted, to convince them of their danger, and awaken them to repentance. Many blessings of the Divine Goodness were bestowed upon them, to reconcile and bring them back to God and their duty, from which the devil had seduced them. These, by the divine blessing, were made effectual for the conversion and recovery of many in all ages; but still were insufficient for any general reformation. The Son of God only was able to oppose, and frustrate the designs of the arch-enemy to God and

and his creation, and to redeem mankind from the tyranny of the devil and liableneſs to hell, and reſtore them to the obedience and favour of their rightful ſovereign. Him therefore the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs had before the creation ordained, and at the appointed time ſent him into the world on this glorious deſign. Accordingly we find that the very firſt promiſe of the Saviour holds him forth in this expreſs character, "as the "ſeed of the woman who ſhould bruiſe the head "of the ſerpent," *Gen.* iii. 15. And St. *John* aſſures us, that "for this purpoſe was the Son "of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy "the works of the devil," *John* iii. 8. This great enterprize he hath atchieved in part, and will accompliſh in perfection, when his office is completed. Apoſtate angels, who enjoyed every advantage for allegiance, but had with unexampled impiety rebelled againſt their Maker, and, under his forbearance to inflict the full puniſhment their apoſtaſy deſerved, had perſiſted in their rebellion, and propagated it in the world to the utmoſt of their power, he totally abandons to their own impiety and ruin; reſolving to make them the monuments of his juſt diſpleaſure at ſin, and their exemplary puniſhment the means of confirming his other ſubjects in obedience and happineſs for ever. Man was in a ſtate more pitiable and reclaimable, and him his wiſdom and mercy intended to reclaim. Wherefore he took not hold of angels to redeem them, but of men, even the ſeed of Abraham his church who ſhould believe in him. He had all along in his divine character oppoſed the kingdom of Satan, and preſerved a people to himſelf. But now as God-man he came in a more

more visible character to purchase our redemption by his merits; and by his personal agency, and the more extensive and efficacious revelation of his grace, to overthrow the kingdom of sin and Satan, and re-establish more fully the dominion of God and righteousness among men. When the Son of God thus appeared, he declared, "now is the judgment of this world, now shall "the prince of this world be cast out," *John* xii. 31. Accordingly the event began immediately to verify the prediction. To mortify these haughty demons, and to qualify himself completely to rescue mankind from their dominion, the Divine Word, first of all, assumed our nature into union with his Godhead, thereby dignifying it above angels, and ensuring our redemption, when these wicked spirits were left to perish in their wickedness. During his residence on earth, he baffled Satan in every repeated assault: prelude to the total and eternal overthrow he should at last give him. By the victorious efficacy of his truth and grace, and the triumphant power of his miracles, which were all levelled against the devil and his works, he cast Satan out of the souls and bodies of all who applied to him; a sign of the entire expulsion from God's kingdom, which the devil and his emissaries should finally receive. But guilty mankind could not legally be delivered from the devil and hell, without a proper satisfaction to God, to free them from the guilt, and his Spirit to deliver them from the dominion of sin. To accomplish this fundamental part of our redemption from all our enemies, the captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, *Heb.* ii. 10. "For, "as the children were partakers of flesh and "blood, he also himself likewise took part of "the

"the ſame, that through death he might de-
"ſtroy him that had the power of death, that is
"the devil, and deliver them who through fear
"of death, were all their life time ſubject to
"bondage," *Heb.* ii. 14, 15. By this great atonement for our ſinful world Chriſt hath procured redemption from ſin and Satan, death and hell, to his brethren of mankind, and every right to tranſlate them from the ſlavery of Satan into his kingdom of grace and ſalvation on earth, and to advance them to ſupply the thrones vacated by theſe apoſtate ſpirits, in his heavenly kingdom. Thus while the ſerpent who tempted Judas to betray, and the Jews to condemn the Son of God, bruiſed for a little, the loweſt part of his complex perſon, his heel, the Son of God, by the merits of theſe ſufferings, bruiſed mortally the ſerpent's head. He triumphed over all his power and policy, reſcued from him a great part of his ſubjects, and covered the prince of darkneſs with redoubled confuſion. Then did he ſpoil principalities and powers of their uſurped kingdom, and make a ſhew of theſe vanquiſhed enemies of God and his creation, triumphing over them, *Col.* ii. 15. Having conquered Satan by his victorious death, he proceeds next to overthrow his kingdom of impiety and wickedneſs. By his goſpel preached by his apoſtles, and accompanied with the power of his ſpirit, unequalled before he attacked the kingdom of Satan in its greateſt ſtrength, and vanquiſhing every where the ſtrong man armed, and keeping quiet poſſeſſion of his houſe, he tranſlated myriads of mankind in every nation and language from the kingdom of Satan into that kingdom of God he came down to eſtabliſh. The human world that had

had been long under the dominion of the devil and his angels, involved in darkneſs, idolatry, ſuperſtition and vice, are converted to God and goodneſs, by his ſon Meſſiah, and the kingdoms of this earth became the kingdoms of our God and of his Chriſt. Before his office is fulfilled, his victory over the kingdom of darkneſs ſhall be extended, and the dominion of righteouſneſs more fully eſtabliſhed. But his complete conqueſt and expulſion of the devil and his adherents is deferred to grace the conſummating act of Meſſiah's mediation at the end of the world. Then ſhall the arch-rebel with all his aſſociates be ſiſted by the Son of God before his flaming tribunal, to anſwer for their impious oppoſition to the honour of his great Father, and the happineſs of his human brethren. Thoſe malignant fiends whom neither the goodneſs of his government could retain in their duty, nor his long ſuffering patience could reclaim to it, ſhall be doomed for ever to the puniſhments they deſerve. Theſe too of our apoſtate race, whom neither the light of reaſon and God's general goodneſs, nor the ſuperior light of revelation and riches of his grace, had recovered to God and goodneſs, but who preferred the ſlavery of ſin and ſatan to the liberty and happineſs of the ſervants of God, ſhall ſhare the like wretched fate with their wicked maſter. "The Son of Man ſhall "ſend forth his angels, and they ſhall gather "out of his kingdom, all things that offend, "and them which do iniquity, and ſhall caſt "them into a furnace of fire, where ſhall be "wailing and gnaſhing of teeth," *Matt.* xiii, 41, 42. Every being, angelic or human, who would not comply with the laws of his govern-

ment, moral or gracious, but remained obſtinate and irreclaimable in their love of ſin, and their averſion from God and holineſs, ſhall be excluded thoſe glorious regions, where God's eternal empire is to be eſtabliſhed in perfect virtue and happineſs; and ſhut up in that priſon of deſtruction, his awful juſtice hath provided for them: when God's rational empire ſhall, by the adminiſtration of his Son, be cleared of all vice and vicious beings, to the higheſt honour of God, and the glorious Meſſiah; and the everlaſting confuſion of their enemies, and the perfection and happineſs of their ſubjects for ever. "For "then cometh the end, when he ſhall have de- "livered up the kingdom to God, even the "Father, when he ſhall have put down all rule, "authority, and power; for he muſt reign till "he hath put all enemies under his feet," 1 *Cor.* xv. 24, 25. But this naturally leads us to another office of the Son of God.

IV. That he is the grand reſtorer, preſerver and improver, of God's rational creation in goodneſs and happineſs for ever and ever.

This is the moſt general and the finiſhing office of the Son of God, extending to every province of his moral empire, and giving all the methods of his government their higheſt effect. The great deſign of God in all his works of creation and providence, is a manifeſtation of his divine perfections, in giving exiſtence to his creatures, and promoting their perfection and happineſs. And to this grand deſign, the Son of God, in every character, hath eminently contributed. By and with him as the divine Logos, were the deſigns of divine wiſdom and goodneſs for theſe purpoſes decreed before all worlds. By

him, was the univerſe created, and by his providence it is preſerved. But by nothing are theſe intentions of his goodneſs more effectually promoted and ſecured, than by this Word's becoming fleſh, and the Son of God and of Man, and by the offices he performs for the honour of God, and the happineſs of his creatures. Take we a ſurvey of his perſon, of his offices, of his ſufferings, or his glory, we ſhall find them all admirably calculated, and all eminently conducive to exalt the dignity, promote the virtue and perfection, and advance the happineſs of the intelligent creation. By aſſuming our nature into union with Deity, he hath raiſed man, who was inferior in excellence, to be ſuperior in honour to higher beings, and when exalted to our proper perfection, to be on the whole equal to the angels. By the conſtitution of his perſon, which unites all exiſtence, he hath advanced the rational creation into cloſer union with the Deity, and with one another, and given them higher ſecurity of their eternal exiſtence, friendſhip and happineſs. The bleſsful influence of his obedience and atonement, is effectual for redeeming his fallen and human ſubjects, but its moral influence extends to every ſpecies of his rational empire. Men, through his merits, are redeemed from guilt and condemnation to juſtification and life; by his power recovered from ſin to holineſs, and raiſed by both from animal to angelic beings; from worms on earth, to become rivals in glory and happineſs with angels in heaven. Angels, though they needed not the merits of his righteouſneſs to redeem them from ſin and miſery, yet the higheſt of them was dignified, and by his mediation they were mightily confirmed in goodneſs

goodneſs and happineſs. By the connection of God and his creation in the generation and conſtitution of his Son, the creation has got the beſt ſecurity poſſible for its eternal exiſtence, and his virtuous creation of their eternal felicity; for what bond of union can be ſtronger than God's giving himſelf into perſonal union with his creation, and taking creation into perſonal union with *himſelf*? for if the head of the creation, united with the eternal fountain of life, muſt live for ever, the connected parts muſt live alſo. If the bond of union and medium of communion between the eternal Father and his vaſt empire continues, the union and communion thereby effected can never fail. Exalting creation into perſonal union with its divine Creator, Chriſt hath dignified and ennobled creation above what it was before, of creatures making them kinſmen, of the created children of God making them brethren of the Son of God, and more near relations of God through him. "For both he "that ſanctifieth, and they who are ſanctified "are all of one, wherefore he is not aſhamed to "call them brethren," *Heb.* ii. 11. Connecting creation more cloſely with God, and with each other in his perſon and government, he by his mediatory offices communicates to the whole, all that happineſs that reſults immediately from the divine favour or from the good offices of his creation to every being in it. Like the head in the human body, that connecting the animal part with the intellectual principle, dignifies, animates, and improves every inferior part of the animal frame: ſo Chriſt, as Son of God, and head of the creation, connecting the world with God,

and its different parts with each other, no leſs dignifies and improves the whole. By him as the grand repoſitory of the divine Spirit and life, his related members are improved in all wiſdom and goodneſs; and under his viſible and gracious adminiſtration, as Lord and governor of the univerſe, all evil ſhall be extirpated from the empire of God, and righteouſneſs and peace and happineſs univerſally and for ever prevail. The irreclaimable rebels are baniſhed his kingdom, to tempt the virtue, diſturb the peace, and endanger the happineſs of his ſubjects no more. The recoverable are reclaimed to their duty; the good confirmed in their goodneſs; men raiſed to a reſemblance of angels in goodneſs and glory, and exalted to poſſeſs with them the ſame heavenly kingdom; angels raiſed to higher dignity and happineſs; the whole dutiful creation improved in the divine image, their higheſt perfection; confirmed unalterably in their allegiance to him, their indiſpenſable duty; bleſſed with his higheſt favour and enjoyment, their ſupreme happineſs, and ſecured of its continuance and increaſing improvement through eternal ages. Well, then, might the angels, that announced his birth, proclaim, "Glory to God in the higheſt, and on "earth, peace, good-will, towards men," *Luke* ii. 14. for the honour of God and happineſs of his creation were to be alike promoted by his Son our Saviour. And as in time this God-like deſign has been begun, and is carrying on, ſo through all eternity, ſhall it be preſerved in perfection. By Chriſt, as vicegerent of God, in his immediate intercourſe with his rational creation, ſhall the vaſt empire of Jehovah be viſibly govern-

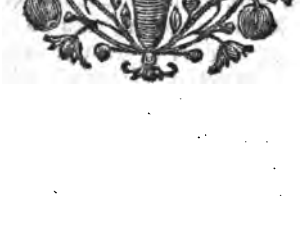
governed, confirmed in their love and duty to their eternal Father, and continued the happy objects of his love, through their immortal exiſtence. Equally allied to God and his creation in perſon, he ſhall, by his office, ſecure their alliance to each other to eternity. The Son of God, he ſhall adminiſter all things to his Father's glory; the Son of Man, he ſhall conduct every thing for his brethren's good. The creator of the univerſe as God, the head of the creation as man, the grand connecting bond in the univerſal ſyſtem of being, as God-man; the divine Word embodied with created nature, he ſhall remain the medium of intercourſe and guarantee of everlaſting friendſhip between God and his creation; his power ſhall ſuſtain his [redacted] in eternal exiſtence, and his government preſerve them in love and obedience. His Spirit ſhall preſerve them in eternal perfection, and his infinite fulneſs ſhall complete and ſecure their happineſs for ever. Like the Sun, that beſt image of the divine glory and goodneſs in the material world, who adorns, chears, and actuates his vaſt ſyſtem through all its parts with his light and heat; ſo ſhall Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs, the brighteſt image of his Father, and glory of the whole creation, from his imperial throne in heaven enlighten and enliven, chear and rejoice for ever his immenſe empire of virtuous beings through all its provinces; adorning them with his image their higheſt glory, and diſpenſing full to them every bleſſing of the divine goodneſs for ever and ever. God's whole creation ſhall rejoice in his Son as the everlaſting friend of God and his creatures, and through eternity

ſhall admire and extol the conſummate wiſdom and goodneſs of this wonderful conſtitution, by which the honour of God is illuſtriouſly exalted, and the virtue and happineſs of his creation are raiſed to the higheſt pitch, and ſecured by an eſtabliſhment that can never be ſhaken.

Such are the capital offices the Son of God was to execute. And how fully do they demonſtrate the neceſſity, and juſtify the wiſdom and expediency of his marvellous generation, his wonderful perſon, and the labours and ſufferings to which he was expoſed. The generation and perſon of God's begotten Son, the condeſcenſions of his life, and the humiliation of his death, ever have been, and ever muſt be held the moſt amazing of the works and ways of God. But though the wonder can never ceaſe while the infinite dignity of the divine perſon is known, it ceaſes to be inexplicable and appears every way wiſe and worthy of God, ſo ſoon as the offices he was to execute are taken into the account. The redemption of fallen and confirmation of fallible; the reconciliation of diſcordant and the immutable eſtabliſhment of all virtuous beings; the union of God with his creation, and of creation with God in tyes and relations to the honour of both, and which can never be diſſolved, were no ordinary purpoſes, and required no ordinary perſon to atchieve. Nay, ſo arduous was the enterprize, that according to our beſt directed apprehenſions of things from Scripture and reaſon, no perſon but the one provided was qualified to accompliſh it. None but God-man and the Son of both could give that proper and condign ſatisfaction for our ſins, that was neceſſary to purchaſe

chaſe our ſalvation, and could apply effectually this purchaſed ſalvation to its proper objects; none but God-man could be effectual mediator between God and man, and between men and angels, ſo as to remove the unhappy differences ſin had occaſioned, and reſtore reconciliation and peace in the creation of God. None but God-man could ranſom our guilty world from the devil and hell; baffle the policy, and break the power of ſatan; deſtroy his kingdom of impiety and wickedneſs, and having humbled his pride in judging him at the bar of the Son of Man yet as Son too of God ſhould baniſh him and all his followers from the great empire of God and righteouſneſs, and conſign them for ever to the priſon of deſtruction. None but he who unites all natures, divine and created, could dignify creation, unite his creatures to their Creator, and to each other in ſuch cloſe and everlaſting friendſhip; give them by his perſon ſuch ſecurity for their eternal exiſtence, and continuance in the divine favour and heaven, and by his adminiſtration attended with all the majeſty of God, yet adapted to a more immediate and engaging intercourſe with his creation, can ſo confirm and improve their goodneſs, to the honour of his divine Father, and the everlaſting advantage and happineſs of his rational ſubjects. "For neither "is there ſalvation in any other; for there is "no other name under heaven given among "men, whereby we muſt be ſaved," *Acts* iv. 12. But what no other could effect, the Son of God could do and hath done. His complex perſon qualified him for his complicated office. His humiliation paved the way to his exaltation.

And by the whole hath he accompliſhed every great purpoſe for which he was appointed "For it "pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all ful-"neſs dwell, and having made peace through "the blood of his croſs, by him to reconcile all "things unto himſelf, even by him, whether "they be things in earth or things in heaven," *Col.* i. 19, 20.



CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the high Honours and Rewards to which the Son of God is exalted, with his juſt Claim to them.

TO the perſonal dignity of the Son of God ſucceed the honours he is poſſeſſed of; and to his important offices, the proper rewards which he receives for performing them. Every being is intitled to honour, in proportion to its excellence and dignity; and every beneficent being to rewards, correſpondent to the offices it performs for the glory of God and the good of his creation. No being, having a created nature, ever poſſeſſed ſuch perſonal dignity and excellence as did the Son of God; none ever ſtood in ſuch near and endearing relations to God and his creation, and none ever merited ſuch high degrees of their eſteem and their affection. No being ever performed ſo many offices for the honour of God, and the happineſs of his creation, as did the bleſſed Jeſus, and none ever merited ſuch illuſtrious rewards. The firſt ſtate of his exiſtence was a ſtate of unexampled humiliation, labour and ſuffering; but the ſecond and eternal one was a ſtate of exaltation, triumph and glory. The glories and felicities poſſeſſed by the Son of God, may be conſidered as proper honours, with regard to his perſonal; and as rewards, with regard to his official character. But as theſe glories are eſſentially the ſame, and the Son of God and Saviour of the world who poſſeſſes them is the ſame perſon, it is proper to

conſider them conjunctly. For in both characters is Meſſiah entitled to, and in both does he poſſeſs theſe honours beſtowed on him. We have conſidered his perſonal dignity and the chief offices he executes; let us now proceed to unfold the honours and rewards which in conſequence of both he poſſeſſes, and the juſt title he has to them.

I. He is the ſupreme object of his Father's love and bleſſed with all its expreſſions, ſuitably to the characters which he had to act. Every Son is naturally beloved of his Father, and from his Father's love flow all the bleſſings his Son receives from him. In like manner the only begotten Son of God is the object of his Father's ſupreme affection, and poſſeſſes this as his primary bleſſedneſs, and the ſource of every honour and reward his Father beſtows on him. As the co-eſſential Word of God, he was the eternal object of his ſupreme love: he exiſted with him in the ſame eſſence, and he poſſeſſed with him all the ſame amiable and glorious perfections. Wherefore God the Father loved him as he loved himſelf, and from their joint perfection and mutual love, with that of their co-eſſential Spirit, did their ſupreme and eternal happineſs reſult. Thus Chriſt declares, that "he had glory with "the Father before the world was, and that the "Father loved him before the foundation of the "world," *John* xvii. 5, 24. But when this Word was made fleſh, and appeared as the only begotten Son of God, he continued the object of God's love, as ſecond perſon in the Godhead, and farther became the object of his paternal affection in character of his Son. God's infinite benevolence that terminated formerly in his divine,

vine, now extends itself to his whole complex person. He could love nothing more dearly than his co-essential Word, but he loves that divine Word now in the additional endearing character and relation of his Son; a Son who was the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person, and who assumed this character to do his Father the highest honour and pleasure in the recovery and establishment of that empire of reasonable beings his omnipotence had created. Accordingly we find that when Christ is mentioned by God as his Son, he is commonly mentioned at the same time as the special object of his love. Thus if God predicts him as his first born, he declares, that "his love he will "ever keep for him, and his covenant shall stand "fast with him," *Psal.* lxxxix. 28. Does he solomnly declare him his Son at his baptism, and install him in the public office of Mediator, for which he had sent him into the world; he says, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well "pleased," *Matth.* iii. 17. and bestows on him his Spirit without measure, as the best expression of his love. When Christ had proceeded far in his labours for his Father's honour and the salvation of his brethren, God repeats the same declaration of his love to his dearest Son, and as a pledge and proof of it, gives him even while on earth, an anticipation of that glory he was for ever to be adorned with in heaven. Being engaged in prayer upon the holy mount, he was transfigured before his disciples, when his face did shine as the sun, and his garment was white as the light, while God appeared in a bright cloud, and again declared, "This is my beloved Son in whom I "am well pleased; hear ye him," *Matth.* xvii. 2, 5.

Amidſt the deepeſt ſcenes of his laſt ſufferings, he continued the ſupreme object of his Father's love, though the characters in which they now acted, forbid the immediate expreſſion of it. When, as righteous governour of the world, God muſt put his Son our Saviour to grief, and fill his whole ſoul with ſorrow; he feels to the very heart for his ſorrowful Son, and removed as ſoon as poſſible from him, that deadly cup he had given him to drink. When Chriſt was about to be involved in darkneſs and ſorrow, from the puniſhment due to our ſins that was now inflicted on him, the ſun is deprived of his brightneſs at noon-day, to announce to the world that the Sun of righteouſneſs was then under an eclipſe. And when he actually yielded up the ghoſt, the veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom, in ſign that the real and complete atonement was now made for the ſins of the world; and that the Great High Prieſt was now entered with his human ſoul as the life or blood of his ſacrifice within the veil, in the higheſt heaven, and acceſs laid open through his merits into the holieſt of all. The graves too were opened at his death, and many dead aroſe at his reſurrection, to ſhow that he had ſubdued death, and was to be the reſurrection and the life to all his followers.

Yet thoſe marks of the divine regards which he was favoured with during his ſtate of humiliation, were only pledges of the future honours to which he ſhould be preferred. The full expreſſions of his Father's love, and the complete rewards of his ſervices were beſtowed only when he had finiſhed the work he had given him to do. Accordingly he has no ſooner performed the humbling but meritorious office of our Saviour,

than

than he is declared the Son of God, with power by his resurrection from the dead. No sooner has he proved his resurrection, and settled the affairs of his kingdom on earth, than he is exalted to his kingdom of glory in heaven. Having vanquished all the enemies of God and his subjects, the Captain of salvation leads a triumph over them all, in his glorious ascension to this high capital of his empire. As the Son of God, he is now exalted to the high palace of heaven, the highest heaven; to receive eternally the expressions of his Father's love, for those unexampled expressions of love to his Father, and benevolence to his brethren he had in time exhibited. There he is invested, as God-man, with all that glory, which, as God, he had with the Father before all worlds. As the bright image of his glory, and the object of his love, he is not only exalted to his throne, but embosomed in the heart of his Father; and wrapt up in that effulgent glory, which is the symbol of his presence, and admitted to his most intimate love and enjoyment for ever: and hence he is called "the only "begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Fa"ther," *John* i. 18. There his human nature is, by the communication of Deity, so adorned with universal perfection, glory and blessedness, flowing from the divine love, as renders it the most truly God-like created nature can be. There he shines in glory brighter than the sun, and which like the sun in this lower world, fills the high regions of heaven with an eternal blaze of splendor and glory: for not only the Lord God, but the Lamb is the light of the new creation, *Rev.* xxi. 23. God views for ever the infinitely amiable glories of his character divine

divine and human, and all the offices he has done, is continually doing and will do, to eternity; and loves him with ſupreme affection, correſpondent to his infinite perſonal amiableneſs and the unexampled offices he hath performed for the glory of his Father, and the good of his creation. There he poſſeſſes the full communication of his Father's goodneſs, filling his whole perſon with bliſs and joy ſupreme and everlaſting.

II. He is the heir and poſſeſſor of all things. A firſt-born ſon has generally, by the laws of men as well as of God, been held heir to his father; but an only ſon ever has. Chriſt is the only begotten ſon of God, and therefore, in all right, his only heir. As God, he hath a natural right to all things in conjunction with the other perſons in ~~of~~ the Godhead; for by him "were all things created that are in heaven "and that are in earth, viſible and inviſible, "whether they be thrones or dominions, prin-"cipalities or powers, all things were created "by him and for him, and he is before all things, "and by him do all things conſiſt," *Col.* i. 16, 17. But beſides his natural right, as God, he as Son of God hath a right alſo of heirſhip to the whole creation. His having right to all things, as God, excludes not, but includes the joint-property of the other perſons. In like manner, his right of heirſhip excludes not, but includes the conjunct title of the Father and Spirit. In conſtituting the Son his heir, the Father does not diveſt himſelf of his property or poſſeſſion, but takes the Son into joint right to, and poſſeſſion of all his fullneſs. His divine nature has a natural ~~joint~~ right to the whole empire. The human nature, disjoined from the divine, can have no right,

right, but what is derived or assigned to it; yet it acquires right, in virtue of its personal union with the divine nature. Thus a wife acquires right in the inheritance of her husband, with whom she is connected, and the body in all the honours or dignities of the soul, with which it personally co-exists. Besides this natural right, founded in the divinity of Christ's person as creator of all worlds, and his right of inheritance to all things as the Son of God, he hath a right of purchase to this world he hath redeemed, and a right of assignation to the whole universe, by his Great Father, for the eminent services he hath done to him, and the favour and affection which his Father bears to him as his Son and the Saviour of the world. Thus, says Christ, "all things are "delivered unto me of my Father," *Matt.* xi. 27. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given "all things into his hand," *John* iii. 35. And St. Paul unites both these rights, when he declares of the Son, that God his "Father hath "appointed him heir of all things, by whom "also he made the worlds," *Heb.* i. 2. But of what is he the heir? He is heir of all the fulness of God. The whole character of his Father is communicated to his Son; "for he is the bright- "ness of his glory, and the express image of his "person," *Heb.* i. 3. The whole essential titles, are also conveyed to him; "for in him dwells "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," *Col.* i. 9. The nature of God is in him; and, therefore, every name and every perfection, declarative of that nature we have seen, is ascribed to him. The whole creation of God is the inheritance of his Son. This world and its inhabitants, by triple right of creation, redemption,

tion, and assignation, are his; for, says God, "I have not only set thee on the holy hill of "Zion, but I will give thee the heathen for "thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the "earth for a possession," *Psalm* ii. &c. Heaven is his throne and the seat of his empire, and all its inhabitants, angelic and human, are his property. In short, the whole fulness of God is his inheritance, and all the honours of the Deity are his; "for all things that the Father hath," says he, "are mine," *John* xv. 16. He is co-partner in the Creator, as he is God; and the head of the creation, as Man; and, as God-man, the Son of God, he is joint-proprietor with his father, and heir of the whole world.

Nor is he only heir, but actual possessor of all things. In his state of humiliation on earth, he seemed to divest himself for a little of the possession of all things in accommodation to the mean state in which, as Saviour of the world, he must first appear. Though he was rich, he for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He suppressed the glories of his eternal Deity, under a veil of human flesh, till his servile state was accomplished, when he should assume to his whole person, as God-man, his glory, as God, and appear the Son of God possessed of all the glory and fulness of his Father. Like the born heir and lord of the world, he used or disposed of the creatures as was proper for his own subsistence, the glory of his Father, and the good of his brethren. But, as became the Son of God and heir of heaven, and the great model his friends were to imitate, he practised a noble superiority to the enjoyments of this world, and aspired after

after poſſeſſions nobler and more worthy. "The foxes have holes; the birds of the air, "neſts; but the Son of Man had no where "to lay his head."

The glories he exhibited were chiefly the glories of grace and truth, and, truly benevolent, he choſe rather to do good to his human brethren, as a Saviour, than to receive honours from them, as the Son of God. But when his offices, as Redeemer of the world, were accompliſhed, then does the Son of God appear in his proper dignity, and take full poſſeſſion of the glorious inheritance to which, by creation, birth-right, and merit, he was ſo fully entitled. The Son of Man, which was the character he commonly appeared in upon earth, now appears full to be the Son of God; and as when converſant with men, he appeared a God in human form, ſo his human nature, now that it is to converſe with God, appears a man in the form of God. Formerly, he was heir, but heir under age; now come of age, he actually enters joint-poſſeſſor with his Father of all his fulneſs. Inveſted with all the ſplendors of divine glory and majeſty, he is ſeated with God on the throne of heaven, and declared joint proprietor and poſſeſſor with his Father, and the Divine Spirit of all worlds and of all beings. His glorified humanity enjoys the moſt exalted and bliſsful part of the creation; the imperial throne of heaven, and the grand court of glorious and virtuous intelligences that continually attend it; and, what is infinitely more bliſsful than theſe, the infinite Creator himſelf. His divinity pervades and poſſeſſes the whole immenſity of creation, formed by his power, and ſuſtained by his providence, as God, and now

poſſeſſed

poſſeſſed by him in the additional character of the Son of God, and heir of all; "for being "the brightneſs of his Father's glory and the "expreſs image of his perſon, when he had "by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the "right hand of the Majeſty on high, being "made ſo much better than the angels, as he "hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent "name than they," *Heb.* i. 3, 4.

III. Chriſt the Son of God is conſtituted the lord and governor of the world. This in ſome reſpect might have been conſidered as belonging to the offices of Chriſt. But as theſe high characters are conferred on Chriſt, not only as the Son of God, but for ſervices he performed as the Saviour of man; and as they belong not ſo much to his miniſtring as to his glorified ſtate, they may with more propriety be ranked amongſt his honours and rewards; and are generally repreſented under this notion in Scripture. Thus ſays St. Paul, "Chriſt hum-"bled himſelf and became obedient to death, "even the death of the croſs, wherefore God "alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him "a name which is above every name, that at the "name of Jeſus, every knee ſhould bow, of "thoſe in heaven, and thoſe in earth, and thoſe "under the earth, and that every tongue ſhould "confeſs [as the original properly expreſſes it] "that Chriſt Jeſus is Lord, to the glory of God "the Father," *Phil.* ii. 8—11. And ſays Chriſt himſelf, "To him that overcometh will I grant "to ſit with me on my throne, even as I alſo "overcame, and am ſet down with my Father "on his throne," *Rev.* iii. 21. This dominion of Chriſt is abſolutely univerſal, extending to the whole univerſe, and to all God's rational ſubjects

jects that do therein exist. "All power, says "Christ, is given unto me in heaven and in "earth," *Matt.* xxviii. 18. Peter affirms him to "be Lord of all," *Acts* x. 36. 18. And says Paul, "God hath set him at his own right hand in the "heavenly places, far above all principality and "power, and might, and dominion; and every "name that is named, not only in this world, "but also in that which is to come; and hath "put all things under his feet, and gave him "to be head over all things, to the church "which is his body, the fulness of him that "filleth all in all," *Eph.* i. 20—23. To this unlimited dominion, we have already shewed, he hath every conceivable right. As God, he hath a natural inherent right of dominion over all, for the whole universe was created by him. As God-man, the Son of God, he hath a right of inheritance. For says God, "I will make him my "first born higher than the kings of the earth," *Psalm* lxxxix. 27. As Saviour of the church, he has a right also of purchase. "For he gave "himself for them, that he might redeem them "from all iniquity, and purchase them to himself "a peculiar people." *Tit.* ii. 14. In consequence of which, he has a right by the grant or disposition of his Father. Thus says he, I appoint or dispose a kingdom unto you, as my Father hath appointed unto me. This government however which he exercises is not merely for his own honour and glory; for his glory is his people's good, and his honour is the happiness of his subjects. To rescue enthralled mortals from the usurpation and tyranny of sin and satan; to fill up the infinite blank between pure Deity and his highest subjects; to make nearer approaches to his creatures, and govern them in a way more adapted

adapted to their nature, and conducive to their improvement and happineſs; to unite God and his creation in cloſer union, and manage all things as the eternal Medium and mediator between them for the honour of God, and the good of his creatures, were the great ends of his being born into the world; and to theſe his whole gracious and God-like adminiſtration is continually directed. In the firſt ſtate of his exiſtence as God-man, he acted rather as the Saviour; in the ſecond he acts as the Lord of the world. Yet both theſe characters he has ever united; as both of them are ſubſervient to the ſame gracious ends. His brethren of mankind needed his firſt attention, and the firſt acts of his royal adminiſtration conſiſted in ſubverting the kingdom of Satan, and in erecting his own kingdom of truth, righteouſneſs, and ſalvation among men. Having redeemed his guilty brethren with his blood, and laid the foundations of his ſpiritual kingdom upon earth, he aſcends to the high capital of his immenſe empire, there to be inveſted in his dominion, with all requiſite ſolemnities, and to enter upon the full adminiſtration of that univerſal empire over which, to his Father's honour and the happineſs of his brethren, he was ever to reign. Arrived at the palace of the Eternal, he is received by his Father with every expreſſion of affection and joy of a Father to a ſon, returned in triumph from the conqueſt of all his enemies, and the ſalvation of his ſubjects, to be made co-partner with him for ever, in the throne of his kingdom. In preſence of all heaven, he is by God proclaimed his ſon and heir. He is inveſted with robes of glory and royalty ſimilar to his Father's. A crown of glory

is ſet upon his head, The ſceptre of government is put into his hand. He is received and ſet down with his Father on his throne, declared king and lord of the creation; and the whole inhabitants of his kingdom commanded to reverence and obey him, with which his loyal ſubjects moſt chearfully comply. There like the ſun in our firmament, he reigns in glory, that illuminates all heaven, and ſpreads joy and happineſs through all its inhabitants. Seated on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers are made ſubject unto him, 1 *Pet.* iii. 22. They are the peers, he is the prince of the great realm. They are God-like beings, he is God in reality. They are principalities and powers, thrones, and dominions, appointed under him; he is the bleſſed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. They are but creatures, however exalted, he, as to the main conſtituent of his perſon, is God over all, and bleſſed for ever. They are but ſervants, he is the Son, the Son of God, and himſelf God. They ſurround the throne, but he hath the poſſeſſion of it. "For he maketh his angels "ſpirits, and his miniſters a flame of fire; but "unto the Son he ſayeth, Thy throne, O God, "is for ever and ever. A ſceptre of righteouſ-"neſs is the ſceptre of thy kingdom; there-"fore God thy God hath anointed thee with the "oil of gladneſs above thy fellows," *Heb.* i. 8. He preſides over the whole celeſtial hierarchy, and directs all their operations and employments, and they ſtand ready with joy to execute his orders. He commiſſions them as miniſtring ſpirits to carry his commands to every part and province of his wide extended empire, and in

particular, to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation. *Heb.* i. 14. He preſides over the ſpirits of the juſt made perfect, receives his aſcending followers into his heavenly kingdom, incorporates them with his celeſtial ſubjects, and governs the whole general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born.

But as he is Lord and Governor of heaven, ſo alſo of earth. The imperial region of his moral empire as God, is the imperial ſeat too of his mediatorial empire as God-man, yet both the one and the other extends to every province of his great creation. The heavens have received his ſacred humanity, and retain him till the reſtitution of all things; but his divinity fills the univerſe, and his juriſdiction extends to every creature that as God he hath made. Even the devil and his angels, though from invincible malignity and pride they will not acknowledge him their ſovereign, and become his loyal ſubjects, know well his ſupremacy, and are ſubject to his controul: they are the priſoners of his juſtice, entirely at his diſpoſal, and made the miniſters of his vengeance againſt the other rebels to his government. For he has the keys of hell, and of death as well as of heaven, the whole inviſible world being under his dominion. *Rev.* i. 18.

But this our human world is a province of his empire, and the church formed in it, the ſpecial ſubjects of his kingdom. Having aſſumed our nature, for the honour of God and the happineſs of his creation, God hath exalted him to be Prince and Saviour to this fallen world, to give repentance to Iſrael, and remiſſion of ſins. Thus, ſays he, "I have ſet my king upon my holy hill "of Zion, conſtituting him head of his church.

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"Ask of me," says he, "and I will give thee "the heathen for thine inheritance, and the ut-"termost parts of the earth for a possession," *Psalm* ii. 6, 8. "I saw in the night-visions," says Daniel, "and behold one like the Son of Man "came with the clouds of heaven, and came "to the ancient of days, and they brought him "near before him, and there was given him "dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all "people, nations and languages, should serve "him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, "which shall not pass away; and his kingdom, "that which shall not be destroyed," *Daniel* vii. 13—14. In like manner, the angel, who announced his birth and character, as Son of God, announced also his dominion: "The Lord God "shall give unto him the throne of his father "David, and he shall reign over the house of "Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall "be no end," *Luke* i. 32, 33. The human creation, in general, are the subjects of his moral; and his church, who submit to the terms of his grace, are under his gracious administration. From the beginning of the world, he hath presided over these as his peculiar people, under the partriarchal and Jewish dispensations, and done every thing for their salvation his divine character would admit. But having assumed human nature, and purchased his church by his blood, he was connected more closely with, and raised to be head of the redeemed world. The divine Spirit and all the fulness of grace was lodged in him, for animating and forming, and all power given him, for guarding and governing this sacred body. By the influence of his word and spirit, he rescues men from the dominion of sin and Satan, through

through faith and repentance, and tranſlates them into his kingdom of grace and holineſs. By his providence, he guards and defends them againſt all their enemies; and by his ſpirit, he improves them in every grace, till he makes them meet for heaven, and then he tranſlates them to this higher and more glorious province of his empire. His is the power of iſſuing out the offers of his grace to a rebellious world, and of appointing officers to promulgate theſe glad tidings. His is the divine power of ſending forth his Spirit of light and life, to accompany his Goſpel, and give it effectual evidence on men's minds, and energy on their hearts, for their converſion and ſalvation. His is the prerogative to appoint ordinances and laws for the benefit, improvement, and government of his people, and his the power to confer upon his faithful ſubjects, every bleſſing of his ſalvation in grace on earth, and glory in heaven.

Thus qualified to be the lord and head of his church, he is no ſooner raiſed to the throne of his kingdom, than he ſends forth the goſpel of his grace preached by his apoſtles, and accompanied by the influences of his ſpirit, into all the world, and the people are made his willing ſubjects in the day of his power, *Pſal.* x. 2—3. Many of the Jews renounced their prejudices and bigotry, and many more of the Gentiles their idolatry and vices. Meſſiah's ſpiritual kingdom ſubduing all the temporal ones which were before it, ſoon became greater than them all. This kingdom he has preſerved ſince its firſt erection, and ſhall continue to preſerve to the end of the world. When the deſtined number of his ſubjects is brought into being, and that relation and likeneſs to him, which fits them for advancement into his heavenly

kingdom

kingdom is effected, then shall the Lord Christ descend as supreme judge, to hold his grand and general judgment of the world. His whole human subjects shall be assembled at his bar. Their characters and conduct shall be canvassed, and their eternal fate be solemnly decided. Those who would not submit to his sceptre of grace shall be dashed in pieces by his power, as by a rod of iron. The wicked irreclaimable beings, angelic or human, who had rebelled and persisted in their rebellion to his government or grace, shall by his supreme decision, and the omnipotence of his power, be excluded the blissful empire of his happy subjects, and be consigned to the prison of destruction, to suffer the proper punishments their crimes deserve; while all his unsinning or returning subjects shall be advanced to the imperial regions of heaven where is the throne eternal of God and his Son, to compose one great empire of glorious and happy subjects, who shall honour and obey their creator and their Lord, and possess every blessing of his goodness for ever.

Yet here Messiah's sovereign dominion does not end; but is only brought to that degree of perfection it never had acquired before, and in which it is to continue to endless ages. "Then "cometh the end when he shall have delivered "up the kingdom, or subjects of the kingdom, "to God even the Father, when he shall have "put down all rule, and all authority, and "power," that opposed his kingdom. "For "he must reign till he hath put all his enemies "under his feet.—But when he sayeth all things "are put under him it is manifest that he is ex-"cepted who did put all things under him." And

when all things are by him subdued unto his Father; his enemies to the power of his justice, and his loyal subjects to a confirmed obedience to his righteous government; then shall the Son himself, as filial duty and the example of all dutiful obedience to Deity require, be voluntarily subject to God as his Father, and who hath put his whole creation under him for ever; that God may be all in all, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24—28. having all that honour and glory reflected by his Son, which he hath conferred upon him; or placed at the head of the intelligent creation, may with and by his Son, as the grand representative of his Deity, and the connecting bond between him and his creation, preside over the whole empire of virtuous beings established under his dominion for ever. Thus the government of Jehovah shall ever include the royal administration of his Son Jesus. Pharaoh gave Joseph government over all Egypt: "only, says he, in the throne will I be greater", *Gen.* xli. 40. But Christ the Son possesseth also the throne of heaven with his Father, and exercises every act of administration their perfected empire shall then require: "For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his "kingdom that which shall not be destroyed," *Dan.* viii 14.

IV. This Son of God is the object of all religious worship to the rational creation. The intelligent subjects of God, that we are now acquainted with, are angels and men; and the Son is, by every right, entitled to all worship from both. As God, he is possessed of all divine perfection that can entitle him to every act of religious adoration. As man his super-eminent perfection, glory and dignity, entitle him to correspondent

reſpondent eſteem, admiration and love: As God-man, his complex perſon is entitled to all religious veneration; his Deity in its own right, and his humanity in conjunction with that divinity with which it coexiſts in the ſame perſon. As God, the Word, he is the almighty Creator, conſtant preſerver, and ſovereign Lord of the whole creation; and therefore entitled to the higheſt religious adoration, from all his rational creatures and ſubjects. As God-man, the Son, he hath done much for the improvement, confirmation and happineſs of angels; and ſtill more for the redemption and ſalvation of men, and therefore is, in all juſtice, entitled to the moſt dutiful regards from both. This honour, ſo juſtly due to him in every character, and upon every principle, his Father hath ordained to be paid to him by the whole creation. Thus, when he bringeth his firſt begotten into the world, firſt at his incarnation and birth upon earth; and more conſpicuouſly at his reſurrection and aſcenſion into heaven, he ſayeth, "Let all "the angels of God worſhip him," *Heb.* i. 8. With regard to mankind, he hath aſſured us, "That he hath committed all judgment to the "Son, that all men might honour the Son, even "as they honour the Father," *John* v. 22, 23. Accordingly we are enjoined, as the the firſt and fundamental act of all religion, "to believe in "him, as well as in the Father," *John* xiv. 1. In his name, and that not as the Word only, but as the Son of God, are Chriſtians and their children ſolemnly baptized, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. and ſo obliged to pay him all Chriſtian worſhip and obedience. And in general, the apoſtle aſſures us, "that God hath highly exalted him, and given "him a name, which is above every name, that

" at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of " things in heaven, things in earth, and things " under the earth, and that every tongue should " confess, that Christ Jesus is Lord, to the " glory of God the Father." *Phil.* ii. 9—11.

Convinced of his just title to them, all his loyal subjects in earth or in heaven, ever have given, and ever shall give him the same religious regards, worship and obedience they give to his Father. His church on earth have ever held him the sacred object of their religious devotion, and to him their best and highest worship, however imperfect and inadequate has continually been directed. In him they believe as the great God and their Saviour. In him they place their firmest confidence, and their highest hopes. Him they revere with sacred reverence, and love with warmest affection. To him as the hearer of prayers, as well as through him to the Father, are their prayers directed for every needful blessing; and to him as well as to the Father, are their praise and thanksgiving for these blessings returned. But much more is he honoured with the supreme devotion, adoration, and obedience of his subjects in heaven. The whole blessed empire of angels and glorified men, ever consider him as the author of their existence, the dignifier of their nature, the improver and confirmer of their goodness and happiness, and the grand security of that existence, perfection, and happiness for ever; and pay him every devout and grateful regard these characters do claim. Considering him as the Most High God, their Creator and preserver, they reckon it their eternal duty to venerate his greatness, and to promote his glory. Viewing him as God-man, their elder brother, and the head of the creation, they

they account all his glory and honour as their own. As he is the bright example of all perfection, they esteem it their highest excellence to resemble him; and as the head of government their highest safety to be under his administration. As source at once and medium of every blessing they derive from God, they love him with every ardour of devout and grateful affection; and for all his glory and for all his goodness, they celebrate his praises for ever and ever. The great aim of the Son of God has ever been the good of his creatures, and the great aim of his dutiful creation will ever be to promote his glory.

Such then are the exalted honours and rewards bestowed on the Son of God and Saviour of the world, and which he shall possess through endless ages. He is the sovereign object of his Father's love, the heir of all things, the lord of the world, and the object of religious affection and worship to the whole intelligent and righteous creation. And how well merited are all these honours! Every honour conferred on him is adapted to the character he assumed; every reward to the services by which it was procured; and all are merited in the highest degree. None ever loved God, as did his most affectionate Son; and so none ever merited so much of his love. Love to his Father was the reigning affection of his heart, and the advancement of his glory the great aim and ambition of his life; and love to the Son is the reigning affection of the Father, and the whole constitution of his government is to advance his glory. Low did he humble himself for his Father's honour, and the happiness of his creatures; infinitely lower than any being that ever existed, and therefore in justice,

he is exalted infinitely above the whole creation, and rewarded with the higheſt honours God can beſtow, and his Son poſſeſs: If he who was eternally in the form of God, condeſcended in time to aſſume the faſhion of a man, what more reaſonable, than that as God-man, he ſhould be exalted to all the glory of God? Did he come down from heaven to unite with our nature, he is now received for ever into the immediate preſence, and into the boſom of his Father. Did he at the will of his Father ſubmit to the fearful ſenſation of his diſpleaſure at ſin for the ſalvation of mankind; he is now admitted to the fulleſt ſenſations of his favour for ever. The proprietor of all things diveſted himſelf of them for a time, and is now juſtly made heir and poſſeſſor of all things to eternity. Did he, the Sovereign Lord of the univerſe which he created, take upon him the form of a ſervant, and has he done the moſt eſſential ſervices for the honour of God, and the happineſs of his creation; what more reaſonable, than that, by appointment of his Father and conſent of his creatures, he ſhould be exalted head and Lord of all? To him, as God or as God-man, creation owes its all; to him therefore in every character, ought creation to be ſubject, and to do all to his glory. All exiſtence unites in him, all exiſtence derives advantage from him, God the higheſt glory, creation its greateſt good, and therefore the Creator and creation juſtly conſpire in their different provinces to advance his honour. Love to his Father and benevolence to his brethren, nay to the whole kindred creation, ever were, ever are, and ever will be the diſtinguiſhing character of the Son of God and Man, and his everlaſting buſineſs as

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the grand connection and mids-man between them will be to advance the honour of Jehovah on the one part, and the higheſt happineſs of his virtuous empire on the other; and therefore love to him from both, and every expreſſion of their love ſhall be his juſt and eternal recompence. He ſhall enjoy for ever the higheſt bleſſedneſs his Father can beſtow, and all the honours his highly favoured and grateful ſubjects can perform. Angels and men both created by his power, and the one confirmed and the other reſtored by his mediation, and both united under his bliſsful government, ſhall ever conſider him as the ſource of their immortal all, and their hearts be devoted to his love, and their lives to his ſervice and glory for ever. "I beheld, and heard, ſays St. John, "the voice of many angels round about the "throne, and the beaſts and the elders; and the "number of them was ten thouſand times ten "thouſand, and thouſand of thouſands; ſaying "with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that "was ſlain, to receive power and riches, and "wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, "and bleſſing. And every creature, which is "in heaven, and on the earth, and under the "earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, and all that "are in them, heard I, ſaying, Bleſſing and ho-"nour, and glory, and power, be unto him "that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the "Lamb for ever and ever." *Rev.* v. 11—13.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Duties we owe to the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord.

WE have in the preceding Chapters inveſtigated the natures, aſcertained the Sonſhip, and given ſome account of the generation of the Son of God. We have, agreeably to theſe principles, delineated the dignity of his perſon, and repreſented the great offices for which he was born into the world, with his effectual execution of them, and the high honours and rewards to which for his perſonal dignity and his offices he is juſtly exalted. Theſe are the capital points of this moſt important article of the Chriſtian faith, and are of the higheſt moment for our inſtruction and happineſs. Our delineation of theſe articles has been general, as we intended to keep as cloſe as poſſible to the ſcriptural repreſentations of it, and that the rays of this great truth, which are diffuſed through the whole ſphere of divine revelation, might be arranged, collected and concentred into one view, which contributes more to our knowledge and belief of it, than an explication more minute and tedious. Let us now conclude the whole, by pointing out and enforcing the duties, which as men and Chriſtians, we owe to this Son of God our Saviour and Lord. Every doctrine of Chriſtianity has a practical deſign, and ought to be improved to the purpoſes of religion and ſalvation; but none more than this fundamental and moſt important one.

one. The Sonſhip and offices of Chriſt comprehend the great foundations of the Chriſtian faith and hopes, and therefore ſuggeſt the great and capital duties of the Chriſtian character. They contain all that Chriſt has become, all that he has done, is doing, or will do for our complete ſalvation, and naturally lead us to conſider all that we muſt be and do, for the honour of our divine Maſter, and to ſecure our intereſt in that ſalvation he purchaſed and reveals to us.

I. Let us ſeriouſly conſider this gracious conſtitution of heaven in the generation and offices of the Son of God for our ſalvation, and be convinced of its truth and neceſſity, its fitneſs and ſufficiency, for the great ends deſigned by it.

Inconſideration is the ſource of that ignorance, ignorance of that diſbelief, and diſbelief of that diſregard to Chriſt and Chriſtianity that have ſo generally prevailed in the world. Did men conſider the Chriſtian ſcheme with that attention its infinite importance deſerves, they could not fail to underſtand it. In proportion as they underſtand it, they muſt be convinced of its truth, neceſſity and importance; and in proportion as they are convinced of theſe, will they admire and regard it. The whole hiſtory of the human world from the beginning, the public face of mankind, and the private feelings of every conſcious individual in every age, join with the declarations of heaven in aſſuring us, that we are ſinful and guilty creatures, and that a divine Saviour was neceſſary to redeem and ſave us. The whole revelations of God to mankind from age to age, have informed us, that of the divine goodneſs a Saviour was provided for us, and that this Saviour was to be the Son of God. And the

fulfillment of all the prophecies given of the Son of God and Saviour of the world, in Christ Jesus, and the glorious characters himself possessed, give every discerning mind the fullest and most incontestable evidence, that he is that illustrious person.

But besides these external proofs of its necessity and truth, Christianity carries much internal evidence of its divinity, and necessity, which, to all who attend to it, is no less demonstrative. Signatures of their divine author are stampt deep upon all the works and ways of God; and the more these works and ways are considered, the more clearly do the divine mind that designed, and the hand that executed them, appear. The salvation of the human, and confirmation of the moral world, by the personal constitution and mediating offices of God's only begotten Son, like the glorious person who atchieved them, are the chief of the ways of God. What but divine wisdom could have concerted such a scheme as the personal union of the Creator with his creatures? A scheme so supernatural, that no mind less than divine could ever have thought of it, and no power below omnipotence could have accomplished it: yet a scheme, which, by the most admirable accommodation of the means to its ends, displays the divine wisdom in the noblest point of view, and which being calculated to display the divine perfection, and exalt, improve, and confirm his rational creation, tends, beyond any thing we can conceive, to answer the ends of the creation, and so holds forth the great Creator to be its author and accomplisher. The whole scheme itself demonstrates not only its divinity, but its necessity also for the ends designed

ſigned by it. If the union of God with our nature, and his atonement for our ſin, had not been neceſſary to procure our redemption from eternal miſery, the Divine Word had never been made fleſh, and the Son of God had never died to procure this redemption: or, did not the wiſdom of heaven ſee it proper by him to reconcile and unite under one glorious head, the various tribes of God's rational empire, Chriſt, as God-man, had never been conſtituted the head and Lord of the creation. For Omniſcience can never err, nor can infinite wiſdom do any thing in vain. We weak, and often prejudiced mortals, who know very little of the meaſures and ends of the Divine Government, are ready to judge of what we do not know, and condemn what we have not conſidered. But, whatever God does, we may be ſure is done wiſely, and well; and the more we know of his great deſigns, the more ſhall we be convinced that every part of them is neceſſary; and that the whole is concerted in the moſt perfect wiſdom.

But as this divine conſtitution demonſtrates its own neceſſity, ſo it no leſs diſcovers its fitneſs and ſufficiency for the purpoſes to be accompliſhed by it. What can more dignify the created Sons of God, than to have their natures united with that of God in the perſon of his Son? What can be a proper and effectual atonement for our ſins, and ranſom of our ſouls, if the blood of the Son of God is not? an atonement proper, being the blood of man; an atonement infinite, being the blood of a perſon who was alſo God. What can ſo mortify the pride of devils, as that men whom they had enſlaved and debaſed by ſin, ſhould be ennobled above angels, by the aſſumption of their

nature into the union with the Divinity, and that redeemed by Meſſiah's merits, we ſhould be exalted to ſupply their places in the palace of heaven; while theſe malignant beings, ſhall be conſigned for ever to the priſon of hell? What can more confirm the authority of the divine laws, than the obedience given to them by the ſupreme Lawgiver himſelf, in human nature? Or what can more eſtabliſh God's creation, in loyalty to their ſovereign, and friendſhip with each other, than the cloſe alliance that is formed among the whole by the wonderful perſon, and confirmed by the offices of his Son our Saviour? Thus Chriſtianity carries its evidence of its divinity, neceſſity and excellence in itſelf. Theſe are the ſources of that faith, by which the bulk of Chriſtians believe and embrace the Goſpel. By the Word of God, in which this ſcheme is unfolded, and by the Spirit of God, by whom they are enabled rightly to apprehend it, they perceive its divinity and excellence: from a ſenſe of their periſhing condition, they are convinced of its neceſſity and importance; and from its admirable fitneſs and ſufficiency for their complete ſalvation, they are brought to approve of it, and to fall in cordially with its gracious deſign. This therefore ought to be the firſt and the ſerious concern of every human being: for this is the great duty of Chriſtianity, and from this every duty we owe to the Son of God our Saviour muſt naturally originate. We muſt ſtudy this glorious ſcheme before we can know it; and be convinced of its truth and importance before we can believe and comply with it, for our ſalvation and happineſs. How careful then ought we to be to know God and Jeſus Chriſt? This of all ſubjects of ſtudy is the

the nobleſt in itſelf, as it has the moſt excellent of all beings for its object. And it is infinitely the moſt intereſting to us, as being the foundation of our whole Chriſtian duty in a compliance with the goſpel, and of our ſupreme and eternal happineſs, in all the bleſſings therein contained. This is what angels and ſuperior beings deſire to look into, and what the redeemed or confirmed creation ſhall conſider as the great ſource of their dignity, and the beſt ſecurity of their everlaſting happineſs, and ſo contemplate it with higheſt pleaſure and joy through eternal ages. This therefore ought to be the firſt and chief ſtudy of every individual of mankind, "for this is life "eternal, to know the only true God and Jeſus "Chriſt whom he hath ſent," *John* xvii. 3.

II. Let us be ſupremely thankful to God and to his Son Jeſus, for this unexampled eſtabliſhment of his grace for the redemption and ſalvation of our periſhing world.

Every bleſſing we derive from God, claims our warmeſt gratitude and our higheſt praiſe; and our obligation to theſe duties riſes in proportion to the greatneſs and importance of the benefits received. Of all the bleſſings God could beſtow, or our guilty periſhing world could receive, the appointment of his Son as our Saviour was the greateſt and the beſt. In creation he brought us from non-exiſtence into our preſent being. By redemption he brings us from a ſtate worſe than non-exiſtence, even a ſtate of ſin and miſery, into a ſtate of grace here and of glory hereafter. By the generous bounty of his providence, he provides for the happineſs of this temporary life, that muſt ſoon have an end. By the riches of his grace, he provides for the happineſs

pineſs of our immortal ſouls, and our immortalized bodies in that life and world that ſhall endure for ever. The firſt of theſe benefits coſt him but a word; the ſecond coſts him the common care of his general providence; but our redemption coſt God the life of his Son, and the Son of God his life and blood. To procure the redemption of our guilty, and the ſalvation of our periſhing world, God muſt become God-man. The eternal Word muſt be born the Son of God in the fulneſs of time; that he might raiſe the children of men to become the Sons of God and heirs of heaven to eternity. The ſovereign of the univerſe muſt be made under the law and become obedient unto death, that we his rebellious ſubjects might be redeemed from the curſe of the law, even death eternal; and be reſtored to life and happineſs everlaſting. What infinite and eternal gratitude then does our human world owe to the three-one God for this unexampled expreſſion of his grace and love! What gratitude do we owe to the divine Father, who ſo loved our world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him might not periſh, but have everlaſting life. He hath ſent his coeſſential Word, by whom he had created us and all things, to aſſume our nature, and become our Redeemer. He hath made him who had been God from eternity, by uniting perſonally with human nature in a moſt wonderful generation, to become the Son of God and man, that he might be Mediator betwixt them, and reconcile and unite them in eternal friendſhip. He hath not ſpared this his Son, his only Son, but hath delivered him to the death for us all, that through his

his atonement he might freely alſo give us all things. He hath exalted him to his own right hand, and inveſted him with univerſal power in heaven and on earth, that he might effectually beſtow upon us theſe bleſſings of his purchaſe. Thanks be nnto God for his unſpeakable gift. Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, to the hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. What gratitude alſo do we owe to the bleſſed Spirit of God, who formed the human body of our divine Redeemer, by his Almighty power, who adorned his ſoul with every godlike perfection of goodneſs and holineſs, who aſſiſted him in the diſcharge of his offices for the purchaſe of our ſalvation, enables us to comply with its offer, and ſeals to us every bleſſing this ſalvation contains.

Eſpecially what gratitude and praiſe do we owe to the Son of God, the glorious Emmanuel, for all that he is become, for all that he has done and ſuffered, and for all that he has procured for the redemption and happineſs of his brethren of mankind! Bleſſed Saviour of the human race, when thou tookeſt not hold of fallen angels, thou tookeſt hold of periſhing men to ſave them, and became our kinſman, that thou mighteſt be our Redeemer. Thou who waſt God, and waſt in the eſſence and boſom of God, from eternity humbledſt thyſelf, by aſſuming our humanity into union with thy divinity, to dignify us; and that thou mighteſt be mediator between God and man, thou becameſt the Son of both. Thou ſuppreſſedſt thy glory for a while to expreſs thy goodneſs, cameſt down from thy throne to thy footſtool,

ſootſtool, of the form of God tookeſt the faſhion of a man, and humbledſt thyſelf to become obedient unto death, that thou mighteſt redeem us from death and hell, and exalt us to heaven and eternal glory. Bleſſed Jeſus, our God and our Saviour, how great has been thy goodneſs to the children of men! Thou broughteſt us from nothing into being, by thy creating power: thou endowedſt us with reaſon, madeſt us capable of religion, and formedſt us for immortality, of thy diſtinguiſhing goodneſs: and when by ſin we had deſtroyed ourſelves, thou didſt purchaſe our redemption by thy blood from every evil, and our recovery to every happineſs, and thou reigneſt for ever on the throne of heaven, dignifying our nature, and giving us every aſſurance of that eternal ſalvation thou haſt graciouſly procured for us. Great Redeemer, the whole creation owes thee much, owes thee their all, but none owes thee ſo much as we. Let every human heart glow with the warmeſt gratitude and love to thee for ſuch unequalled love and compaſſion to us, and let every mouth be filled with thy praiſe: "Salvation to him that ſitteth on the throne, "and unto the Lamb. Bleſſed be he that came "in the name of the Lord to ſave us, Hoſanna to "the Son of David," to the Son too of a greater than David, Hoſanna in the higheſt to the Son of God. "Unto Jeſus Chriſt, who is the "faithful and true witneſs, the firſt begotten "from the dead, and the prince of the kings of the "earth. Unto him that loved us and waſhed "us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath "made us kings and prieſts unto God and the "Father, to him be glory and dominion for "ever and ever." Amen. *Rev.* i. 5, 6.

III. As

III. As the proper conſequence of our belief of this gracious conſtitution of heaven, and the proper expreſſion of our gratitude for it, we ought to accept of this Son of God as our Saviour, and comply with this glorious eſtabliſhment for our complete ſalvation.

This is the great and fundamental duty required of mankind in the goſpel, and the capital regard every man ought to perform to the Son of God, our Saviour and Lord. The fundamental law of the Chriſtian ſcheme alike, wiſe and juſt, is, that as the Son of God, by aſſuming creation into union with its Creator, hath done creation the higheſt honour; and by his offices hath highly advanced their happineſs, ſo all creatures, who would have the benefit of this gracious conſtitution, muſt pay every proper regard to God's Son our Saviour, be conformed to his character, and comply with the methods of his government for their perfection and happineſs. This obſervation holds as to every other province of the great empire of God, and of his Son Meſſiah, ſo particularly as to our human world with which he is eſpecially connected. His perſon and all his offices were ordained for our happineſs, and with the intention of theſe muſt we dutifully comply, if we would obtain the honours and felicities thereby deſigned to us. As the Son of God is the purchaſer, ſo he is the natural and appointed diſpenſer of the bleſſings of his purchaſe; but as Chriſt and the benefits of his purchaſe go together, we muſt receive him as our Saviour, if we would have an intereſt in his ſalvation. As he is the bond of union, ſo he is the medium of communicating every bleſſing from God

God to man: but we muſt be united to him, if we would partake in theſe bleſſings. He is the head of life and influence to the church which is his body, and through him the divine ſpirit, righteouſneſs and life are conveyed to his members; but we muſt be members of that life-giving head before we can partake of his influence and of life. He is the governor of the world and the Saviour of his people, but we muſt comply with the laws of his government, and become his real well-affected ſubjects and people before we can obtain the privileges of his kingdom. He is the Mediator of the better covenant, the bleſſings of which were all purchaſed with his blood; but thoſe only who comply with his covenant, can enjoy the ineſtimable bleſſings it contains. He of God became alſo the Son of God by generation and aſſumption of our nature and likeneſs, and the elder brother and head of the heaven-born family; we of men muſt by regeneration after the divine image become the Sons of God, and the brethren of the Son of God, that we may be the members of his family and coheirs of his inheritance. He in ſhort is Chriſt Jeſus, anointed by the divine Spirit to be the Saviour and Lord of the church. We muſt be true Chriſtians, anointed with the ſame Spirit, and formed after the ſame temper and character with Chriſt our maſter, by a thorough compliance with his religion and ſalvation, if we would have a ſaving intereſt in the merits of Chriſt, and obtain the bleſſings of Chriſtians, which Chriſt hath purchaſed.

Salvation is promiſed ſometimes to faith, ſometimes to repentance, ſometimes to holineſs, and ſometimes to obedience to God and to Chriſt.

But

But the great and general character, of which all these are but the constituent parts, and to which character salvation is annexed, is, that we be real Christians, the friends of Christ by compliance with his gospel, the brethren of Christ by conformity to his image in wisdom and goodness, piety and holiness; and the loyal subjects of his kingdom by a sincere and dutiful obedience to all his commands. A spiritual or moral conformity to the Son of God by his Word and Spirit, in those who are capable of it, and by his Spirit alone in those who are incapable or destitute of the influence of his Word, is the first part of our salvation, and the natural and just foundation of all its other benefits. This applies to persons of every age, and under every dispensation; and ought therefore to be the great concern of all whom the gospel is revealed to, and who would have that blessed relation to the Son of God, which alone can give us an interest in the blessings of his salvation. For "unless a man be "born again, says our Saviour, born from above, "born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot "enter into the kingdom of God," *John* iii. 3, 5. And says St. Paul, "In Christ Jesus neither "circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncir-"cumcision, but a new creature," which he assures us, every man must be, who is truly in Christ, *Gal.* vi. 15. 2 *Cor.* v. 17. The only begotten Son, who is heir to the heavenly inheritance, is the pattern or archetype, according to which all the created and renewed children of the family of God must be formed; and by conformity to him, they become children with him of the same family, and coheirs with him of the heavenly inheritance. He assumed our nature in

generation

generation that he might become our kinſman, and redeem the inheritance. But we alſo muſt be made partakers of his divine nature in regeneration that the alliance may be compleated; and we may have a meetneſs through that image, and title through his merits to the kingdom he hath purchaſed. To begin the ſaving alliance he came down, and partook our fleſh to contract union with the ſons of men, that he might raiſe them to be ſons alſo of God; but to complete the happy connection, we muſt be made partakers of his ſpirit, and through his ſpirit, partakers of his temper and image begun in grace, that we may partake every bleſſing of his grace on earth, and completed in glory, that we may enjoy the bleſſings of glory in heaven.

This bleſſed change, the foundation of real Chriſtianity, and the ſource of our intereſt in all its benefits, is the effect of our compliance with his Goſpel in heart and life through the influence of his Bleſſed Spirit. By this we are at once transformed into the image, and tranſlated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, and as children of God, and brethren of the Son *of God*, we become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt. This is the eſtabliſhed conſtitution of heaven; equally calculated to do honour to the Son of God, the author of our ſalvation, and to promote the happineſs of his people for whom that ſalvation was purchaſed. Compliance with this is the chief duty we owe, and muſt through his grace perform, to the Redeemer of our world, if we would wiſh and hope to have the benefit of his redemption. And this as the whole Chriſtian conſtitution indicates, ſo every part of its revelation expreſsly declares. Thus when God

predicted

predicted his Son's generation and birth into the world, and his inſtalment in his great offices for our ſalvation; he ſays, "Kiſs the Son leſt he "be angry and ye periſh from the way, bleſſed "are all they that truſt in him," *Pſal.* ii. 12: And when he had exhibited him to the world, and announced his character, ſaying, "This is "my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed," he immediately adds what is our capital duty in regard to him, "Hear ye him," *Matt.* xvii. 5. Thus Chriſt when he ſent forth his ambaſſadors the apoſtles to publiſh his ſalvation, and the gracious terms on which men were to receive the benefits of it, expreſsly declares, "He that be-"lieveth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved, he that "believeth not, ſhall be damned," *Mark* xvi. 16. And his apoſtle therefore having aſſured us, that "this is the record of God, that God hath "given to us eternal life, and that this life is in "his Son," inſtantly ſubjoins an account of the juſt and eſtabliſhed way in which we ſhall obtain it. "He that hath the Son hath life. He that "hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 *John* v. 11, 12.

How careful then ought every man to be, to whom this ſcheme of ſalvation is revealed? ſeriouſly to conſider its infinite importance, and firmly to believe, and cordially to comply with it. Our eternal happineſs depends on the ſalvation of Chriſt; our intereſt in that ſalvation depends on our being true Chriſtians, and our being true Chriſtians depends upon our ſincere approbation of, and hearty acquieſcence in the Chriſtian ſcheme. This to every human being, is his higheſt intereſt, and ought to be his great concern. Convinced of our ſin and guilt,

guilt, and that without a Saviour we muſt periſh for ever; convinced that there is no other name by which we can be ſaved, but the name of Chriſt; convinced that we muſt receive him as our Saviour, and fall in with the gracious terms of his Goſpel, if we would obtain his ſalvation; and convinced of the unſpeakable happineſs we ſhall thereupon enjoy, we ought with immediate, and moſt cordial affection, by his promiſed Spirit, to comply with this eſtabliſhment of God for the ſalvation of mankind in its full extent. We ought to renounce all our ſins by immediate and unfeigned repentance, reſolved to return to God and to our duty, through his Son the Mediator. We ought to accept of Chriſt as our Saviour, with our whole heart and in his whole character; deſirous to be reſtored by his ſpirit from ſin to holineſs, and by his merits from guilt and condemnation, to juſtification and life; ambitious of nothing ſo much as to be the children of God, and brethren of the Son of God, to be taken under the guidance of his ſpirit, and conducted ſafe to his heavenly kingdom; and reſolved by his grace to adhere to our illuſtrious maſter in every Chriſtian affection, to form upon his character, and obſerve his laws. We ought never to be ſatisfied with our knowledge of Chriſtianity, however enlarged, till we alſo believe it. No faith in the Goſpel ought to ſatisfy us, for none can ſave us, but what produces a thorough compliance with it in heart and life. And never ought we to flatter ourſelves that we are ſincere Chriſtians, who have complied with the Goſpel of Chriſt, and have that relation to him, which will give us an intereſt in his ſalvation, till we find in our minds an habitual belief and approbation of this gracious ſcheme; a ſupreme love to our

God who contrived, and to the Son of God who executed it, and a real conformity, through his ſpirit to his amiable character in the prevailing temper of our mind, and tenor of our life. For if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his. They only who embrace the religion of Chriſt, can obtain his ſalvation. They only who are ſpiritually united to Chriſt, by faith, love, and univerſal holineſs have ſecurity of their eternal union, and communion with God, and of enjoying every bleſſing of his love and goodneſs.

IV. Having complied with his Goſpel, and accepted the Son of God as our Saviour, we ought to maintain and cultivate every worthy ſentiment and dutiful affection which we owe to him both in his perſonal and official character.

Jeſus, we have ſhewed, poſſeſſes every nature divine and created, and every character of greatneſs and goodneſs, and ſtands to us in all thoſe relations of our Creator, Preſerver, and Redeemer, that lay a foundation for every pious and Chriſtian affection of which our minds are capable. Let our minds therefore ever entertain thoſe juſt and exalted ſentiments of his perſon and offices, and our hearts all thoſe devout affections to him he ſo juſtly deſerves. Let us not, with Arians and Socinians, hold the Son of God, our Saviour, to be but a more exalted creature when we have every evidence the word of God can give us, that he is God the Creator. Nor let us, with Semi-Arians and others, hold him to be only a generated Deity, and deprive him of ſome of the nobleſt characters of divinity, neceſſary exiſtence, ſelf-exiſtence, and abſolute eternity, when all

all Scripture aſcribes theſe perfections to him alike as to the Father, affirms their eſſence to be one, and their perfection one; and all reaſon dictates that whatever exiſts in the one divine immutable eſſence, and is conſubſtantial with that eſſence, muſt be equally ſelf-exiſtent, neceſſarily-exiſtent, unoriginated and eternal with that divine eſſence, or any other perſonal ſubſiſtence into which it is diſtinguiſhed. In oppoſition to theſe errors, which are ſo contrary to every principle of Scripture and reaſon, ſo derogatory to the honour of the Great God, our Saviour, and which have been ſo detrimental to his religion in every age; let us ever conſider him, in his divine character, as the ſecond perſon of the co-eſſential, co-equal and co-eternal Trinity. In his complex perſon, let us view him as the divine Word made fleſh, the begotten Son of God, the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, the Creator of all things, as God; and, as God-man, the Head and Lord of the creation, and the kinſman and Redeemer of his brethren of mankind. Let the devout ſentiments of our mind and affections of our heart ever bear proportion to theſe juſt notions we have of his perſon and character. Let us venerate his divine perfection, glory, and Majeſty, as God over all, and bleſſed for ever, our almighty Creator, and our ſovereign Lord. Let us admire the condeſcenſions of his love to mankind, who aſſumed our nature into union with his divine perſon; and, in that complex perſon, became the Son of God, and the Son of Man, that he might reconcile God and Man, and be the author and pledge of our eternal friendſhip. Let

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Let us highly eſteem him as the glorious Immanuel, God, and the Son of God, Man, and the Son of Man, the image of the inviſible God, the head and glory of the creation, poſſeſſing every excellent nature and every perfection, of which theſe natures are poſſeſſed. Let us love him with our whole ſoul, who, as God, called us from nothing into being, and who, as God-man, has recovered us from a ſtate worſe than nothing, and will raiſe us to the higheſt perfection and happineſs, of which our natures are capable. Let us ever reverence him as our God, love him as our brother, regard him as our ſovereign, and rejoice in him as our Saviour. Let us truſt in him as the bleſſed Mediator, through whom we have acceſs to every bleſſing of the divine favour, and let us repoſe all our hopes of pardon of ſin, acceptance with God, and life eternal, in his merits and mediation. Let us exult in him, as the everlaſting bond of union and medium of communion, between God and his creation, and of the rational creation one part with another, and triumph in the victories he hath atchieved over all our enemies, and in the ſecurity he hath given us, in his perſon and offices, of our immortal exiſtence, perfection and happineſs. Chriſt poſſeſſes every excellence that claims univerſal regard, and has done us every office that can excite our affection, gratitude and love. That mind muſt be blind indeed, which ſees not his excellence, who unites every perfection; that heart muſt be hard, and deſtitute of every ingenuous and noble principle, that feels not regard and good affection to the author of our being, our Redeemer from ſin and death, and our Reſtorer to life and hap-

pineſs everlaſting. The Son of God is the perſon whom angels and ſuperior beings eſteem, admire and revere, and in whom God himſelf ſupremely delights. Let man ever join in the general good affection. Of all beings, we are the moſt indebted to him, and of all creatures we ought the moſt to love him. All that we have and hope are derived from him, and to him let our beſt affections be conſecrated. Let our minds be devoted to his knowledge and faith, and our hearts to his reverence and love. Let us ever truſt in him as our faithful friend, rejoice in him as our God and Saviour, and long for the enjoyment of him, as our everlaſting happineſs. This is the nobleſt exerciſe of our powers as we are men, and our eſſential and diſtinctive character as Chriſtians. By theſe worthy ſentiments and good affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, we perform the principal duties we owe to our Maker and Redeemer, and have the beſt evidence that we are his genuine friends and ſubjects, and that we ſhall obtain every bleſſing he will beſtow upon his people.

V. Let us expreſs theſe devout affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, by a ſtedfaſt profeſſion of his religion, and by a faithful performa ce of every act of religious worſhip, ſo juſtly due to him, and a ſincere obedience to all his commands.

Chriſtianity, where it is genuine, muſt ever be ſeated in the heart, but muſt not be confined there. Our internal good affections to the Son of God, our Saviour, muſt exert and expreſs themſelves in a dutiful profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and in every act of religion and obedience to our divine Maſter, that is therein enjoined to us.

Infidels